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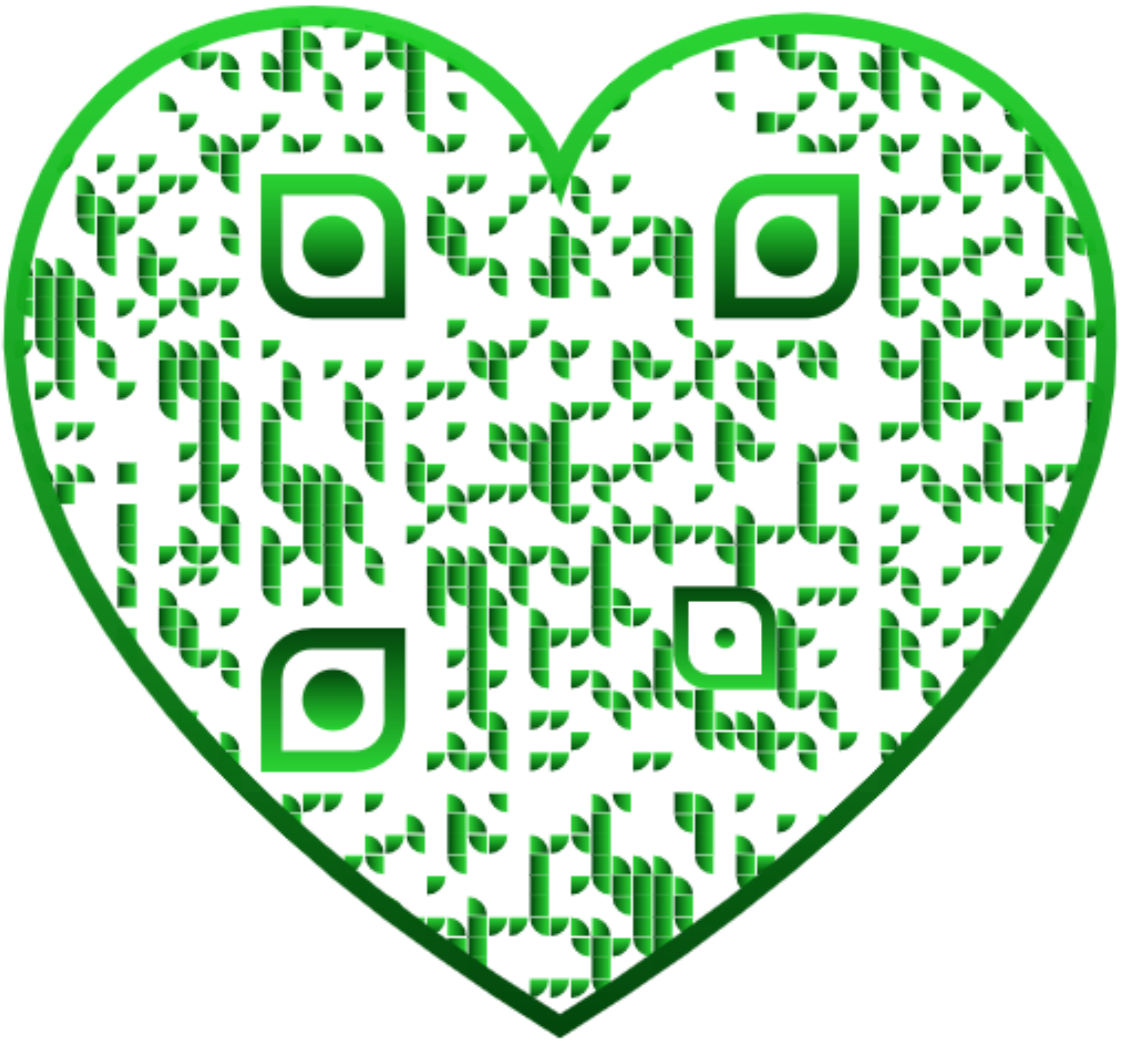

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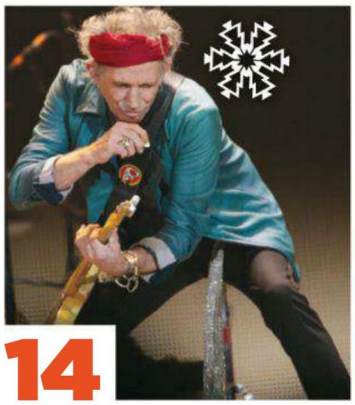

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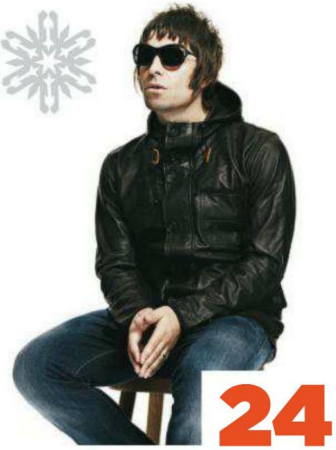

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"BEST PRESENT EVER? THE SNOW, MATE"
HE MEANS ACTUAL SNOW, NOT DRUGS. RIGHT, LIAM?

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SLEIGHLIST

THE SOUNDS ROCKING AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREES OF THE NME STAFF THIS WEEK

LISTEN TO EVERY TRACK ON NME.COM/REVIEWS NOW!

TRACK OF THE WEEK

THE KILLERS

I Feel It In My Bones

Now as inevitable as hearing drunk, party-hatted elderly relatives make mildly sexist comments over the Brussels sprouts, The Killers return this year with their seventh seasonal single. A sequel of sorts to 2007's 'Don't Shoot Me, Santa', the song and its campy B-movie video see the band's former tour manager Ryan Pardey, nicknamed 'The Captain', reprising his role as a cigar-chomping, vigilante vision of Saint Nick. He's made his list, checked it twice, and now he's mercilessly hunting down those naughty Killers. As for Brandon's desperate protestations that "*Maybe I was naughty once but now I'm nice*"? Santa does not care one iota of his soot-blackened heart. He even dispatches poor old Ronnie Vannucci's brother for having the temerity to have a mounted deer's head on his wall. The tune itself avoids Christmas bombast and eschews sleigh-bell cliché, opting instead for a driving, 'Road To Hell'-style groove over which Brandon Flowers breaks out the cracker-worthy reference: "*I sweat like a Snowman, out in the sun*". The man who gave the world the po-faced lyric that I hate more than any other ("*Are we human, or are we dancer?*"), here refuses to take himself at all seriously. Hearing a slick, tight band given an excuse to just piss about makes me wish it could be Christmas every day.

Kevin EG Perry, writer

> ***It avoids Christmas bombast and eschews sleigh-bell cliché***

GLASVEGAS

No Her No Hymn

This is crisply beautiful – all shivering piano and bells and James Allan's broken croon – but also quietly devastating. The band have asked for a donation to Scottish Care And Information On Miscarriages, and lines like "*Mother religious, 'til birth do us part/Then carry on the same like you did in the start*" will force hand to wallet and heart to throat.

Emily Mackay, writer

TIM WHEELER & EMMY THE GREAT

Zombie Xmas

Last Christmas, lovers Tim and Emmy gave us their hearts by recording the best festive album in years. This year, they broke up (awk) but they have released a new-for-2012 video for 'Zombie Christmas' in the spirit of the season of reconciliation. It's *Shaun Of The Dead* meets the 'Mistletoe And Wine' video as zombies descend on roasting chestnuts.

Dan Martin, writer

ALPHABEAT

X-mas (Let's Do It Again)

The Danes obviously don't celebrate Christmas. Because if they did then Danish duo Alphabeat would know what a Christmas song actually is and what Christmas cheer is made of. They definitely wouldn't try to sabotage it all with this joyless atrocity about taking Christmas up the arse for another year.

Eve Barlow, Deputy Editor

DOG IS DEAD

Wonderful Christmastime

Recently in *NME*, Dog Is Dead paid homage to Michael Jackson's 'Thriller' by dressing in *those* jackets and dancing like zombies. Now they're doffing their cap to Macca by covering his festive staple. The saxophone parps are just as sensual as their crotch-grabbing.

Jamie Fullerton, Features Editor

ALEXIS TAYLOR

Jesus' Birthday

In between all the ITV1 specials and eggnog lattes, it's easy to forget that the true meaning of Christmas is the unsanitary barn birth of a megalomaniac with a beard. So thanks to Hot Chip's Alexis Taylor, whose nine-minute minimalist instrumental sounds like a Casio recreation of Mary's womb during those crucial final contractions.

Sam Wolfson, writer

DMX

Rudolph The Red-Nosed Reindeer

Recorded on the fly for an amazing video (find it on YouTube, now), DMX brings the gravel-voiced spirit of the Ruff Ryders to this year's festivities with a freestyle rendition of the Christmas classic. Like Santa's hip-hop helper.

David Renshaw, News Reporter

GABRIEL BRUCE

Silent Night

In the midst of all the Christmas crappiness, London's most svelte aesthete reminds us that this time of year should be a celebration of the immaculate conception and the birth of ol' JC. He's done this by covering 'Silent Night' in a voice so low it makes Barry White sound like a choirboy.

Matt Wilkinson, New Music Editor

COLD SPECKS

Christmas Evermore

Christmas round Cold Specks' gaff seems a bit of a drag. "*I wish it were Christmas evermore... it put an end to war*", she trills; her guests stare bleakly at the turkey and wonder why they can't just pull a sodding cracker instead. Still, she has turned this Mary Margaret O'Hara song into a slow-burning, brassy ditty.

Ben Hewitt, writer

ANDY WILLSHER

PEACE

All I Want For Christmas Is You (Live on BBC 6Music)

Usually I'd slap any indie band that took on Mariah's winter classic. The song is too big for "cool". That's probably why Peace have decided to mix up their version with Radiohead's 'Creep'. Makes them sound like weirdos, but weirdos you'd still snog at the Xmas party.

Siân Rowe, Assistant Reviews Editor

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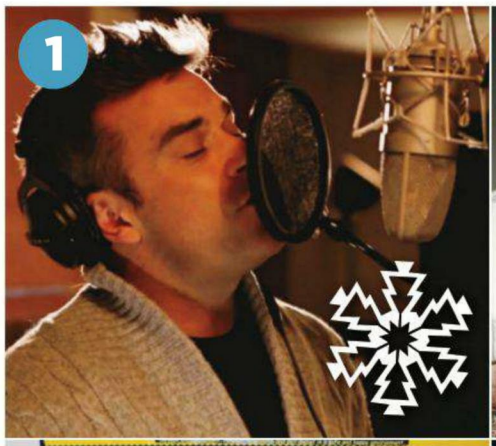
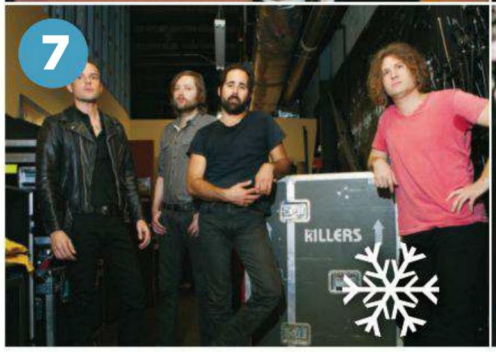
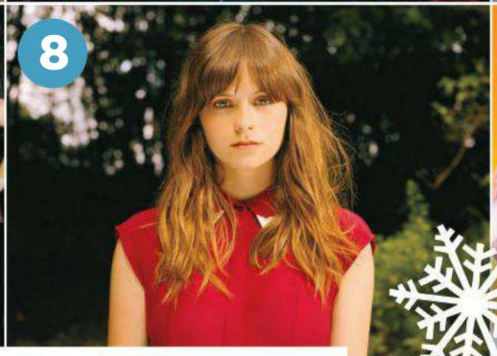
UPFRONT

WHAT'S HAPPENED AND WHAT'S HAPPENING IN MUSIC THIS WEEK

Edited by Dan Stubbs







SINGLE BELLS

A handy guide to the Christmas Number One playing field, offered up by ***Gavin Haynes***

MAIN EVENT

With *The X Factor* in decline, this year's Christmas Number One race is as open as it's been since Gary Jules surprisingly slipped into the top spot with 'Mad World'. Will it be the moment that a fish-loving Pakistani becomes the Aled Jones of 2012? Or is Carly Rae Jepsen set to become the Bob The Builder of disposable Canadian pop? Here are the runners and riders...

1 THE CHARITY ONE

The Justice Collective

'He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?

This year saw the release of a damning judicial report implicating the police in manipulating the facts of 1989's Hillsborough disaster, in which 96 Liverpool FC supporters where killed. Accordingly, The Farm's Peter Hooton and a Liverpool MP have organised a range of Scouse-aligned artists to sing The Hollies' classic to help pay victims' families' legal bills, with star wattage

PIANO TUNA

Meet The £1 Fish Man himself

People said my song was so catchy I should go to *The X Factor*."

WHERE DID THE '£1 FISH SONG' COME FROM?
"My owner, he said, 'Shahid, you have to shout to the customer.' So the first day I started shouting and there was no reaction. The next day, I make the '*Come on ladies/Come on ladies, £1 fish*' song.

WERE YOU ANNOYED THAT YOU DIDN'T GET THROUGH?
"Yeah, it's a very, very shocking thing for me."

HOW DO YOU FANCY YOUR CHANCES OF BEING NUMBER ONE?
"I will try. It's my fate to go to Number One."

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE PLANS?
"I will make more songs. I have one called 'You Are So Beautiful'. '(*Sings*) *I'm watching your face/I'm watching your eyes/I'm watching your legs/You are so beautiful*'."

WILL THERE BE A £2 MEAT SONG?
"No! I don't want the prices to go up."

going as high as Paul McCartney, Mick Jones and Robbie Williams.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
Well, it's better than that 'Band Aid 20' one where Dizzee raps: "*Spare a thought this Yuletide for the deprived/If the tables turned would you survive?*"

ODDS 3/10 favourite

2 THE X FACTOR ONE

Either Christopher Maloney, Jahmene Douglas or James Arthur

Title TBC

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
Simon Cowell's Westfield-eyed sock-puppets are in open retreat this year. After viewing figures for the TV programme plunged, the annual *X Factor* winner's single has been moved so it no longer comes out in the week just before Christmas. However, a single with profits going to kids' charity Together For Short Lives is out this week.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
It's all for charity but this is the sound of a failing brand.

ODDS: 6/1

3 THE NOVELTY ONE

The £1 Fish Man

'The £1 Fish Song'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
Upton Park market trader Muhammad Shahid Nazir moved to Britain from Pakistan only a year ago. He found work selling fish and made up a silly ditty based on a Punjabi folk song to help him shift more. Someone recorded it. It got three million hits on YouTube. He made it to the early rounds of *The X Factor*. Now Warners are putting it out to sate demand for his, er, tunery.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
More authentically neo-globalist pop than a stack of MIA records balanced on top of a stack of Yeasayer records on the back of a Delhi rickshaw. If you're looking for the sound of the 21st century, and enjoy hearing about high-quality, low-cost fish, this is the song for you.

ODDS: 17/1

4 THE GRANNY'S FAVOURITE ONE

Ladywell Primary School

'O Holy Night'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
In November, six year-old Glasgow native Caden Beggan lost his fight against childhood meningitis. His classmates have recorded a new version of the carol that they are selling through iTunes to raise money for meningitis research. Their campaign has caught on, and so far the song has climbed as high as Number 23 in the iTunes charts.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
Well, it's a lot of kids singing in memory of a kid who died. No LOLs here.

ODDS: 14/1

5 THE REIGNING CHAMPS' ONE

Military Wives

'Stronger Together'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
The gals whose chief qualification for pop success is that they have regular sex with men who fight for a living romped home last year, selling 600,000 with a little help from Gareth Malone's subtly manipulative documentary and a massively manipulative song. They had a new album out in November, but without a new TV spot, they're not tilting full-speed for the top of the charts like they once were.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
Crurckey.

ODDS: 20/1

It's as Christmassy as getting pissed in a Wetherspoon's

6 THE ONE-HIT WONDER ONE

Carly Rae Jepsen

'This Kiss'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
Fresh from trying to seduce homosexuals on the year's biggest pop hit, the *Canadian Idol* third-placer returns to the fray with an equally disturbing lyric about the joys of snogging someone behind your other half's back. It's out on December 10.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
A disappointingly limp piece of by-numbers synthpop, the only bit that could ever get anyone's motor revving is when they stick her voice through some effects that make it sound like she's talking on a dodgy Skype connection.

ODDS: 35/1

7 THE THEY-TRY-EVERY-YEAR ONE

The Killers

'I Feel It In My Bones'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
For the past seven years, even when they were officially 'on hiatus', The Killers have indulged themselves by putting out a Christmas single, generally in support of Aids charity RED. This one is a sequel to 2007's 'Don't Shoot Me, Santa'.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
As quintessentially Christmassy as getting mind-bendingly pissed in a Wetherspoon's with people you barely know then losing your jumper and ringing them up the next day only for them to tell you they haven't got it.

ODDS: 40/1

8 THE IN-AN-AD, INNIT ONE

Gabrielle Aplin

'The Power Of Love'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
Ever since Ellie Goulding rescued her career by singing Elton John's 'Your Song' for John Lewis' Christmas campaign two years ago, gangs of managers have queued up outside their ad agency with demo tapes of wispy-voiced Birdy-alikes playing flat piano chords. This year, it's the turn of Gabrielle Alpin, who "gained a following online after publishing acoustic covers of songs by bands such as Paramore and You Me At Six on YouTube", it says here. She has recorded a cover of Frankie's famous festive chart- topper that has nothing much to do with Christmas.

CRACKER OR TURKEY
For a scary child singing about love as though she is dying of emphysema, it's surprisingly moving.

ODDS: 20/1

9 THE SINGLE FROM A GREATEST HITS ONE

Girls Aloud

'Beautiful 'Cause You Love Me'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
The Girls are creaking their bones round the PR circuit for one last wheeze before they dissolve back into mutual loathing. Things don't bode well, though. In November, the first single from their new career-spanning greatest hits record was beaten to the top spot by Olly Murs.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
So workmanlike, you can see the crack of its arse when it bends over.

ODDS: 10/1

10 THE BUY THIS DRESS ONE

Kate Bosworth

'Winter Wonderland'

WHAT'S IT LIKE?
Remember chopped'n'screwed? Those 20-minute drawn-out versions of Justin Bieber songs that ended up sounding like Sigur Rós? It's a bit like that. This glacial-paced minimal rewrite is primarily an excuse for actress Kate Bosworth to star in a video in which she wears a spangly sequined Topshop dress, while a single camera rotates around her. Topshop have paid for all this and say they're angling for a Number One.

CRACKER OR TURKEY?
Well, the dress is nice. Kate Bosworth certainly knows how to stand still while a camera revolves. The song? Zzzzzzz.

THE HOLLIES AND THE IVY

John Power on 'He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother'

How did you become involved with the Hillsborough campaign?
"It's in people's minds because of the independent inquiry this year, so we decided to do something and it's grown and grown."

Beyond the money going to victims' families – would getting to Number One be a kind of moral validation?
"It's kind of a little celebration that the truth is coming out now."

Did you get to hang out with Macca?
"No, I was bumping into people like Peter Hooton, Mick Jones, Jon from Reverend And The Makers..."

Are you glad to be tanning the rump of *The X Factor*?
"I have to thank *The X Factor* for making me completely stop watching TV. I find the whole thing slightly offensive."

What about your outsider rival – 'The £1 Fish Song'?
"I haven't heard it, but let the public decide. If 'The £1 Fish Song' gets there, then so be it."

GETTY, LONDON NEWS PICTURES, PIETER M VAN HATTEM, ALAMY

LOST IN CREATION

***Mark Beaumont** heads to Tokyo to get the lowdown on former Creation boss Alan McGee's new venture*

In downtown Tokyo, 'Loveless' means something very different to the seminal album from Creation Records alumni My Bloody Valentine. "It's a sex shop," says Takashi Yano, pointing out a dark-windowed store in the Shibuya district.

Not only is Yano the man behind bringing Kevin Shields and co to headline his Tokyo Rocks festival in May next year, he's also responsible for bringing Creation founder Alan McGee out of his self-imposed retirement in rural Wales. McGee is curating Tokyo Rocks for the second year running and has been inspired to set up a new record label.

"I had absolutely zero intention of doing anything in music," says McGee of his first rock action since he quit managing bands in 2008, following the demise of his post-Creation label Poptones. "People have been trying to get me to get involved, bands asking me to manage them and people trying to get me to start labels, for about four years."

But it was an invitation from Tokyo that really caught his eye and, before he knew it, McGee had helped book Primal Scream to headline Tokyo Rocks 2012, which is where he met his new collaborator Yano. "He's the first person I've met in the music industry in years that's inspired me. He's very Creation in that way of 'Can we be the fucking biggest?' In a lot of ways I met my match in Japan. All the people in Europe that I meet in the music business always look as though they're about to commit suicide!"

The pair soon hatched plans for a new kind of record label. "We were talking

"Aye, my hat should match my stained glass windae"

Tokyo Rocks star Yojiro Noya

"Geez peace a chance, man"

TOM OXLEY

about a new move," says Yano. "It's not the 1990s so it's not only CDs; we'll do the festival and tours and create new music communication."

Expanding on this, McGee says: "It's gonna have to be more of a communication company than a record label. We've got to go into business with bands because I don't think it works to just sell their CDs and downloads any more. I hate to call it a 'lifestyle brand' because I don't mean it like that, but you're getting the idea."

The new model will also get a new name: "We threw away the idea of Creation pretty immediately because Creation was Creation – it was what it was but it's done. I felt uncomfortable after I thought about it, calling it Creation," he adds.

As for new bands, McGee says there's "about four new bands I'd definitely sign and about three old bands – when you say 'old', they've been around for a bit – that have great attitude and I would do them as well. But it's conjecture at the moment."

One thing that is set in – rather ancient – stone is the location of the as-yet-nameless label's HQ. "There's this little town about five miles down the road from my house in Wales and I bought its chapel in an auction," he explains. "I bought it for next to nothing, about 30-odd grand, and that's going to be HQ when we get around to doing the label. I'm half thinking about buying the mental institution! It'd be amazing to go, 'Gillespie, d'you want to put a gig on in a mental institution?' I'm sure they'd be up for it."

> *"Music biz people in Europe always look suicidal"*
>
> ALAN McGEE

Given McGee's new Japanese connection and his work on Tokyo Rocks 2013 – a two-day event in May 2013 at the Ajinomoto Stadium in Tokyo – he's currently working on scouting out the Far East's answer to Oasis. "In Japan it's like how music used to be 20 years ago," he says. "What's not permeated Japanese culture is that *X Factor* culture; rock'n'roll culture is still massive. They've still got a rock'n'roll backbeat to the music."

One major act leading Japan's new rock charge is Illion, second on to MBV at the festival, and the solo project from Japan's biggest rock star Yojiro Noda, whom McGee describes as "Kevin Shields from Asia".

"If I'm going to do music I want to do it outside Japan as well," Yojiro says of his music, which marries the esoteric rock of Local Natives with Radiohead's electronica. "Of course I'm influenced by music from the UK but I have traditional Japanese sounds as well and I'm confident that I can do well in the UK too," he says.

Before the new label can properly get up and running, however, McGee is hard at work finalising the Tokyo Rocks bill, working on a new film called *Kubricks* with writer/director Dean Cavanagh, compiling his memoirs and setting about "suing the *News Of The World* for phone hacking". But despite this flurry of activity, he's not about to jump on his former party bandwagon and return to his hedonistic ways.

"I'm in the middle of doing the chapel up," he laughs. "I'm going to put on old-age pensioner tea dances there. The local OAPs have asked so I'm gonna let them do their tea dances there. I go from rural Wales to stadiums in Tokyo – somewhere there's a join!"

McGEE'S GUIDE TO RESTARTING A LABEL

STEP ONE: GET INSPIRED
Early 2012: McGee meets Tokyo festival promoter Takashi Yano to talk over potential label ideas. "Takashi's flying the flag for all of us," McGee says. "He thinks left-of-centre but thinks big. I went 'Yeah, OK, I'll do it with you because you're a fucking headcase!'"

STEP TWO: GET INVOLVED
May 2012: After being out of the rock circuit for a few years, McGee DJed at Tokyo Rocks 2012: "The Primals played and 30,000 people showed up, it was nuts," he says.

STEP THREE: GET A TEAM
Aside from Takashi, McGee's putting together a motley crew of collaborators including "a great guy I found that owned a studio".

STEP FOUR: GET A CONCEPT
After realising that the traditional record label model wouldn't work for them, the group are planning on overseeing a business partnership with bands, becoming a badge of affiliation rather than a distributor of CDs and downloads, and taking in tours, festivals and communications.

STEP FIVE: GET A BASE
Or, in McGee's case, buy an actual chapel in deepest Wales. "I've got a graveyard!" he says. "I've got to cut the grass though, keep the locals happy. It's fucking massive!"

STEP SIX: GET BANDS
Although he's keeping it under his hat at the moment, McGee's plotting to get some big bands: "There's bands I really believe in that I think have got a great attitude and have got tunes, but let's just see where it goes."

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The thought of shopping for Christmas presents filling you with dread? Fear not, because HMV are a one-stop shop for the best pressies, offering all the latest tech gear, tablets, headphones and speakers as well as a huge range of CDs, DVDs, books, vinyl and band merchandise. Now they're offering one *NME* reader the chance to win a massive bag of HMV swag including Beats by Dr Dre headphones, a Gear4 Union Jack Street Party dock, a Muse vinyl box-set, a Led Zeppelin special-edition 'Celebration Day' live CD and DVD, a stash of DVDs, a signed copy of Duff McKagan's book and – deep breath – a bundle of this year's best CDs, including a signed copy of Two Door Cinema Club's 'Beacon', Alt-J's 'An Awesome Wave', Example's 'Evolution Of Man', The xx's 'Coexist' and more.

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NEWS OF THE WEIRD FROM THE NME NEWSROOM

LITTLE DRUMMER BOYS
Former Razorlight drummer Andy Burrows has enlisted Muse's Dom Howard to record a theme tune for the sequel to Christmas classic *The Snowman*, titled *The Snowman And The Snowdog*. Watch out, Aled.

The world's coolest taxi

BONNIE PRINCE SMELLY
Alt.folk-rocker Bonnie Prince Billy has launched his own aftershave. It's an unlikely step into the fragrance market for the hirsute singer, with a bottle of his beardy scent on offer for the bargain price of $220 (£136).

LIVE FAUX-EVER
Like Pamela Anderson and Pink before him, Liam Gallagher has taken a stand against the use of fur in fashion and banned it in his Pretty Green stores. The animals can rejoice while the hoods on millions of parkas look set to go unlined this Christmas.

COD YOU BE LOVED
Bob Marley's family have settled a lawsuit against his half-brother after the family member was accused of illegally using the Marley name to sell fishcakes and energy drinks.

HOT CHIP(S THE GOALKEEPER)
Hot Chip have teamed up with comedian Peter Serafinowicz for the animated video to their single 'Don't Deny Your Heart'. The clip is a football computer game tribute that culminates in players getting off with each other. You don't see that on *Match Of The Day* very often.

TALKING HEADS

SHAUN RYDER: WHY I LOVE UFOS

Happy Mondays singer makes TV show to prove existence of aliens

Amazingly, he doesn't even do drugs any more

"I've been fascinated by UFOs since I was a kid. In 1978, I saw something that defies physics – an object flying around the sky at about five or six thousand miles an hour. I was in Salford on my way to work as a post boy. I wasn't high or nothing. And it wasn't just me that saw it. There were a couple of girls that'd seen it, and a schoolboy.

"I've been away the past few weeks chasing UFOs around the world for a TV show, *Shaun Ryder On UFOs* [due next year on History]. My recent investigations led to me to Chile, which was great because Chile don't keep any of this shit secret. I've got pilots flying to the Chile airports telling me they've seen things that, you know, aren't from this world. The Chilean military are so fucking inviting to you – 'Come in, we'll show you all our files and our secret films, have a cup of coffee'.

"I've seen one film that looks like fucking *Starship Troopers* coming out of the sky on pogo sticks, right? And they're going towards the ground coming out of the sky, and when they've spotted people taking film of them, they disappear back up in the sky. That's authenticated film.

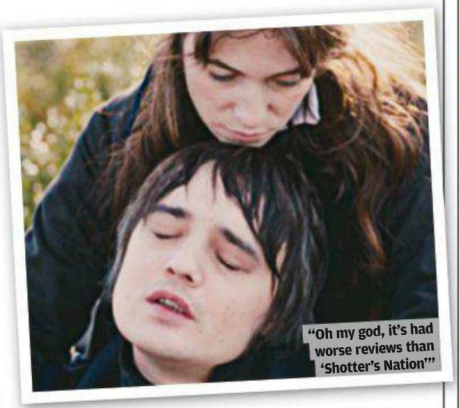
"So I'm a believer. You'd be pretty stupid if you thought we was all alone in the universe. But I wouldn't say I'm a ufologist. A lot of ufologists, are fucking up it, mate. They're not ufologists, they're just fucking raving bonkers, just absolute knobheads. Then you've got some that are really smart and intellectual – scientists.

"A lot of musicians are into UFOs – it's because we've got incredibly intelligent brains. Robbie Williams loves them and he's fucking, you know, genius! I have no idea what I'd do if I actually made contact. I probably wouldn't like to talk to an alien. I'd probably die of a fucking heart attack."

Happy Mondays play London's Roundhouse on December 19 and 20

PETE'S NEW FILM IS A CRAZY SHAMBLES

'Confession...' comes out to awful reviews and Pete doesn't show up at the premiere


"Oh my god, it's had worse reviews than 'Shotter's Nation'"

Surfing into London's Leicester Square on a tide of extremely scathing reviews, Pete Doherty's film *Confession Of A Child Of The Century* is out in cinemas now. Naturally, Pete failed to turn up to its premiere in the UK capital last week (December 3).

Directed by Sylvie Verheyde and also starring Charlotte Gainsbourg (with whom leading man Pete had an affair during filming, hence she didn't show up to the premiere either), the film sees Pete as Octave, ambling around the French countryside in an enormous top hat, pursuing a relationship with Gainsbourg's Brigitte after they bond by bumping into a friendly goat on a country walk.

Here are five things we learned from the premiere...

1. THERE'S A GOOD REASON WHY HE DIDN'T SHOW UP

"He wanted to come, but maybe he's anxious," director Verheyde told the crowd before it started. Actor Josephine de la Baume added: "He used to work here and steal a bunch of stuff."

2. CARL MIGHT NOT LIKE IT

Early in the film Pete's voiceover declares: "It was not long before the whole of Paris had deemed me the greatest Libertine."

3. HE GETS BETTER AT SHAGGING

Although things get better for him later in the movie, in Pete's first sex scene he pukes while pumping away – a bit like Chelsea's Ashley Cole in that tabloid story a while back (Google it, if you've got the stomach).

4. IT WAS SUPPOSED TO BE IN FRENCH

Confession... was supposed to have French dialogue, but it had to be switched to English after Pete came on board. "I speak bad English," Verheyde confessed, "and, er, he speaks bad French."

5. HIS CHAT-UP TECHNIQUE IS CRACKING

Pete's opening gambit to a lady at a particularly debauched party? "Have you been loved? Do you want to be loved?" It gets better. His first words to Brigitte (when they're stroking a goat): "I was wondering why God created you. Was it to heal those who suffer?" Guess it beats "Do you come here often?"

THE BEST OF NME VIDEO.COM THIS WEEK

METALLICANADIANS

http://ow.ly/f1470

See Metallica at their monstrous best in this preview of their DVD *Quebec Magnetic*.

CLICK: 00:30 – He's going to fall over if he keeps that up.

FROST STAR

http://ow.ly/f14sx

Charlie Simpson braves a Siberian winter to play the world's coldest ever gig.

CLICK: 00:45 – He's a record breaker!

NIGHTMARE VISION

http://ow.ly/fLAU6

Tune-Yards' bassist Naytronix debuts the new video for 'Nightmare'.

CLICK: 2:48 – WAIT, IS THAT TOM MORELLO? NO, NO IT ISN'T.

SHONEN HEART ATTACK

http://ow.ly/flhkf

Mariko Doi of Yuck's other band, Parakeet. They're The Breeders to Yuck's Pixies.

CLICK: 3:39 – Purple haze!

DAN DENNISON, ALAMY

THE DEBATE

'I'M BRINGING MYSPACE BACK': CAN JUSTIN DO IT?

Justin Timberlake has bought a significant stake in Myspace. Can he save the ailing social network from oblivion? ***Luke Lewis*** *and* ***Al Horner*** *battle it out*

AL: If anyone can bring sexy back to Myspace, JT can. After all, just like his new purchase, Timberlake's second coming – from cauliflower-haired 'NSync pin-up to solo megastar – wasn't supposed to amount to anything, but look how that ended: one of *the* landmark pop records of our time, with a whopping 11 million copies sold worldwide. While the ability to mount a monumental chart comeback isn't the same as rescuing a dying social media brand, Timberlake has proved he's the master of reinvention and knows exactly what people want.

LUKE: You're pinning your hopes on a former member of 'NSync? The artist formerly known as Trousersnake? People have this idea that Timberlake is some kind of digital guru, purely because he played one in *The Social Network*. It's insane. Beyond enabling a hundred "bringing sexy back to Myspace" headlines, what's he actually good for? But that's precisely the problem with the Myspace 'comeback'. It's all style, no substance. The other month they produced a fancy, expensive-looking demo and everyone went 'Oooh!' But it didn't answer the fundamental question: what role is Myspace supposed to fill in our lives? What on earth do we really *need* it for in 2012?

AL: Let's put this another way: it's been a long time since Weezer stomped a 'Blue Album'-shaped hole in my life and the years since haven't been an easy ride for me and my fellow Rivers Cuomo fans. So much so there should really be some sort of support group (I'm pretty sure their Lil Wayne collaboration gave me post-traumatic stress disorder). But if they were to release a new album tomorrow I'd give it the respect of an open mind because, like Myspace, they had a huge impact on my teen years. Plus, Facebook and Twitter might not exist had Myspace not led the way with social media. Think about that before your next hilarious anti-Myspace status update.

LUKE: Yes, Myspace was big when you were a teenager. But so were Razorlight. Do we really need to go back there?

Starring in *The Social Network* doesn't actually make you Mark Zuckerberg, y'know

Myspace thrived for a simple reason: it was where you went to hear free music. That was a novelty in 2005. Now we have YouTube, Spotify, Deezer and numerous other places, all competing with each other. There's no gap in the market for Myspace to fill – things are overcrowded as it is. As if we're not exhausted enough, updating Instagram, Tumblr, Twitter and all the rest. Now we have to log in to bloody Myspace again as well? Sorry. I can't face it.

AL: Did Razorlight change the music-consumption habits of a generation and pave the way for further innovations in their field? No, they just swaggered around looking silly 'til the world got bored. Myspace innovated then, and judging by early tester reports, they're innovating again now. One of the sad ways the internet has changed music is that album artwork gradually became redundant. The new Myspace is visual-heavy, more so than Deezer or Spotify, so it could deliver a richer experience than those platforms. That's exciting.

LUKE: That's pure nostalgia. Myspace has been off the radar for just long enough that people now feel a twinge of affection for it. Cast your mind back just a couple of years: people *hated* Myspace. It was a joke, a throwback. People were chortling gleefully over its troubles. Now the great wheel of nostalgia has turned in its favour – but it won't last. 'New Myspace' is roughly as welcome as The Darkness' comeback. As in: good on them for not giving up. But we've all moved on. Time to give it a rest.

REX

THE NME CHART

1	NEW	THE KILLERS	'HERE WITH ME' *Island*
2	NEW	IMAGINE DRAGONS	'RADIOACTIVE' *Interscope*
3	NEW	MUSE	'FOLLOW ME' *Warners*
4	3	JAKE BUGG	'TWO FINGERS' *Mercury*
5	15	WILLY MOON	'YEAH YEAH' *Island*
6	17	TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB	'SUN' *Kitsuné Music*
7	7	BLOC PARTY	'KETTLING' *Frenchkiss*
8	20	OF MONSTERS AND MEN	'MOUNTAIN SOUND' *Island*
9	10	MUMFORD & SONS	'LOVER OF THE LIGHT' *Island*
10	2	BASTILLE	'FLAWS' *Virgin/EMI*
11	NEW	HOT CHIP	'DON'T DENY YOUR HEART' *Domino*
12	NEW	ALT-J	'MATILDA' *Infectious*
13	11	GREEN DAY	'STRAY HEART' *Warners*
14	NEW	FOALS	'INHALER' *Transgressive*
15	9	BEN HOWARD	'OATS IN THE WATER' *Island*
16	13	THE VACCINES	'I ALWAYS KNEW' *Columbia*
17	NEW	BIFFY CLYRO	'BLACK CHANDELIER' *Warners*
18	19	LIANNE LA HAVAS	'AGE' *Island*
19	6	THE LUMINEERS	'HO HEY' *Dualtone Music*
20	8	DJANGO DJANGO	'LIFE'S A BEACH' *Ribbon Music*

NME RADIO

Hear the chart rundown first every Monday at 7pm on NME Radio
NME.COM/RADIO

The NME Chart is compiled each week by NME Radio and is based on how many times each track has been played on the station over the previous seven days.

THE KING'S SPEECH

At Christmas we turn to our leaders for words of wisdom and truth. So it is that **Paul Weller** offers his manifesto to wake up the nation. Long live the Modfather...

"Musically, 2012 has been really great. I just started getting excited again by loads of new stuff: the Toy album is amazing, Melody's Echo Chamber, Lucy Rose... and Palma Violets being on the cover of *NME* was fantastic. Their single is really good. And Jake Bugg, I like him, and how he's saying he's against all the *X Factor* shite. I just got a vibe that there's some bands coming up who are doing things for the right reasons, who are into doing their thing and not driven by success or commercialism.

"One of my highlights of the year was the first gigs we did at the Roundhouse in London for 'Sonik Kicks', playing it in full. That was a statement, just 'cos I'm sick of all these fucking bands getting back together all the time. I did go and see The Stone Roses at their London show, and it was good, and it's great for them: they're much bigger now than they ever were back then. But I'm more interested in what's going on now, and what's going on tomorrow.

"I watched loads of the Olympics. It was great how excited everyone got about it, and it brought about a great national pride, but in the nicest way possible. When you see Mo Farah or Jessica Ennis and, obviously, Bradley Wiggins, they're people who've worked fucking hard to get where they are, who are at the top of their game. Again, they're doing things for the right reasons and it's inspiring. Hopefully, it's the start of us getting away from celebrity culture and fame for fame's sake, and we can get back to people being known for being good.

"As for me, I'm at home for Christmas with the twins [John Paul and Bowie, born in January this year], but in terms of 2013, I don't know. I've been working on a soundtrack thing, for a British film. I don't wanna say too much about it yet 'cos it's early stages, but I'm really excited about that, about doing a whole soundtrack. I'm also gonna do a couple of bits on Miles Kane's album – his new stuff sounds great. And I want to do more gigs, just because I'm still really into the live thing. I just feel like generally it's a good time at the moment. And next year will be as well."

> "IT'S A GOOD TIME AT THE MOMENT. AND NEXT YEAR WILL BE AS WELL"
> PAUL WELLER

DEAN CHALKLEY, ALAMY

Merry
Christmas

"CHRISTMASES? I DON'T REMEMBER A LOT OF 'EM..."

After two incredible 50th anniversary shows at the O2, **Keith Richards** is on a high. He tells **Hamish MacBain** all about his plans for Christmas and, more excitingly, how he's expecting to have a busy 2013 with the Stones

How strange. It is Friday, 5.30pm and, rather than doing what I'd normally be doing at this time – taking Alt-J off the office stereo and replacing it with the somewhat more mood-enhancing sounds of The Rolling Stones – I'm sat by the phone, waiting for one of The Rolling Stones to call. And if I were to tell you that it is THE Rolling Stone then... well, the picture on the opposite page has given the game away, but even if it hadn't, you'd still know who I was talking about, right?

Whenever we're talking about who we should put on the cover of the Christmas issue of *NME*, we always figure it needs to be someone who has owned the last 12 months, but also someone who'll make everyone smile and make everyone excited about what's happened this year and what is going to happen next year. Now, up until last week, had you asked me what the event of 2012 was I'd have said the Olympic Opening Ceremony or The Stone Roses finally playing together again or whatever. If you had asked me what my gig of the year was, I'd have said Pond somewhere in Texas, The Stone Roses in Warrington, or Palma Violets in their house. But then, right at the end of November, I found myself in the O2 Arena, witnessing the Greatest Rock'N'Roll Band In The World, 50 years young, ending a year of rumours, retrospect and near-riots over ticket prices, by being just that. The Rolling Stones felt *vital*. And all of a sudden, everything else I just mentioned above seemed to pale in comparison.

So we decided that on the cover we wanted the man who for half a century has been the beating heart of the Stones. Here – just behind the beat, as ever, at 5.31 – he comes. If a picture is worth a thousand words, and '(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction''s riff is worth twice that, then that instantly recognisable, beautifully guttural croak of laughter is a whole novel. And a novel which, as Keith Richards will explain, is still a long way from its conclusion.

NME: So it's the evening after the night before: you played your second and final O2 Arena show last night. How do you feel? How do The Rolling Stones feel?

Keith: "Oh, the band's riding high, man, it's been a couple of great shows. It was a real kick in the pants for us all. And it seems to have all gone down well. After being off the road for five years... we were having a ball up there, but it was relaxed and everybody was on form. We all enjoyed ourselves like mad. It was great to play with Bill [Wyman] again – to look round and see the man-mountain there was quite a turn-on onstage. And Mick Taylor, playing his arse off, it was a real joy to play together again. I mean, it's been 40-odd years since I played with Taylor."

> "THE WHOLE POINT OF ROCK'N'ROLL IS TO BE A LITTLE FREE AND EASY"
>
> KEITH RICHARDS

That was not something I, or many people, imagined they would see.

"Well, there you go. The Stones will always pull some surprises."

How did you go about sorting out what to play?

"We thought, 'It's 50 years, so let's not get chronological, but let's bear it in mind, so let's start off with some early stuff'. We rehearsed about 150 songs. It's a big well to draw from."

It was nice that you mixed it up quite a bit. A lot of big bands these days play exactly the same set, every single night.

"That's pathetic, man. That must drive them mad! The whole point of rock'n'roll is to be a little free and easy, and have some fun at it and take a few chances with it. I mean, you're not in the bloody army, you know?"

On both nights, Mick made a joke of all the kerfuffle there has been over the price of the tickets. On refection, do you think the prices were fair?

"Whatever the market will bear, man. You know, whatever came through, we chose the best deal ticket-price-wise that we could. Anything else that was on the table would've been even more. So we're just doing the best we can. It takes a lot of money to put those shows on, and we live in those kind of times. At the same time, those tickets were snapped up in four minutes, so it obviously ain't too painful, is it?"

You had Florence Welch on one of the nights doing 'Gimme Shelter'. You a fan?

"I've never met her before or seen her work, but I just went, 'Wow, there's a strong voice'. And as it turned out, she's a hell of a performer. I mean, she gave Mick a run for his money! And she can move. Great fun, lovely girl. We'd do it again."

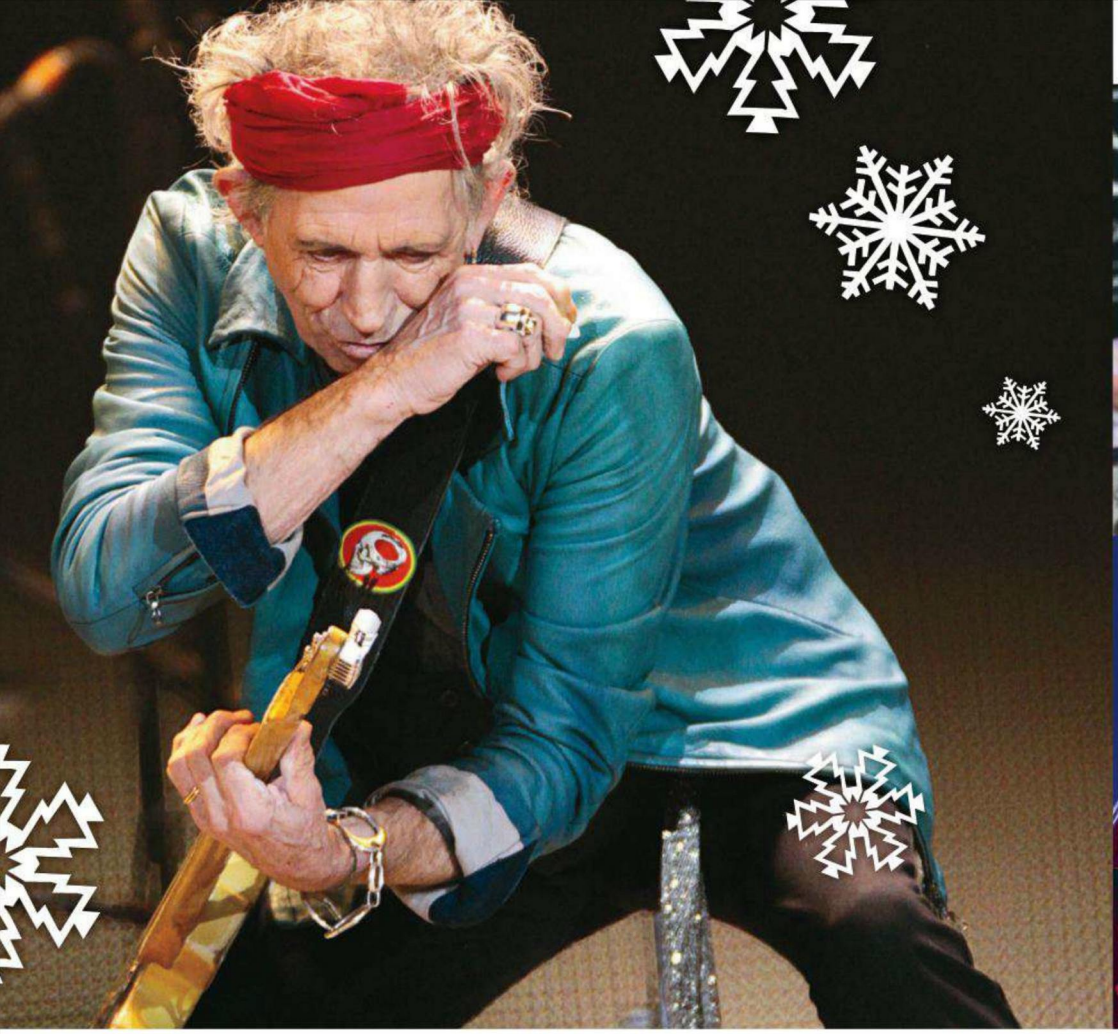
Is there much other new music that floats your boat? Do you keep up with it?

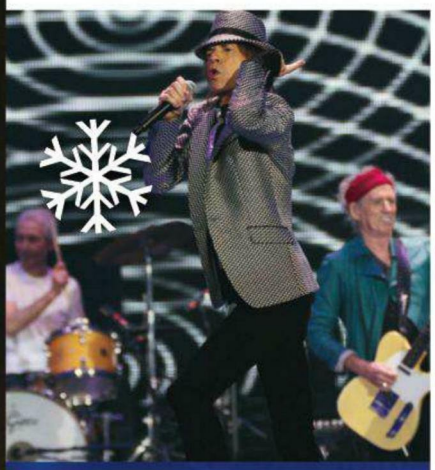
"There's this one cat called K'Naan, from Somalia, now works out of New York, who's got some good stuff going. But I don't play keep-up, no. If I hear something that I like, I say that's nice, and I'll chop the track out. But otherwise, I just listen to what I've always listened to, which is rhythm and blues and blues, that's my staple diet. And a dose of country music, and a touch of Mozart."

A big music story this year was The Stone Roses getting back together. Do you know their stuff?

"No, I don't. I know they're a pretty good band and everything, but look, the only

TIM WHITBY/GETTY, PHIL WALLIS, DAVE HOGAN/GETTY, DAVE BENNETT/WIREIMAGE, LFI





Stones I've been involved in this year has been The Rolling Stones. So great that they've reformed, and I hope that they enjoy it as much as we do."

What about the Olympics? Did you watch much of it?

"I watched nearly all of it, as much as I could. There was a lot of it! And hey, what about Bolt, from Jamaica, my other home island! He was amazing. I saw the Queen jump out of the plane, which I thought was great... but otherwise this year I've been slowly working on constructing what we've just put together. Pulling the band together at the beginning of the year..."

Naturally, with the 50th anniversary comes a lot of looking back. There's 'GRRR!', the new greatest hits collection; the film *Crossfire Hurricane*; you did the book the year before... is reflecting on all that you've done something you enjoy?

"Of course it is! Yeah. I wouldn't be here talking to you if I didn't enjoy it. Ninety per cent of the element of what we do is: you've gotta enjoy it, you've gotta love it, and that's the way it is. You don't get this for free, you know?"

You went to the *Crossfire Hurricane* premiere, and sat and watched it with Mick, Charlie, Ronnie and Bill Wyman. What did you all think of it?

"We felt that Brett Morgen had done a great job, and found some incredible footage, and stuck to pretty much the story of the band, without getting carried away too much with, er... extraneous affairs."

Which is not to say they were not included...

"There was a lot of footage I hadn't seen before, where I was like: 'Oh, I didn't know there was a cameraman there!' But a good cameraman, you don't notice them: they're your friend, so you can capture moments that you're unaware of, which can be fun."

What do you think now when you see the 18-year-old Keith Richards on screen?

"I just wish him well, man. It's a long road!"

On 'GRRR!' all those riffs are collected once again. Which, to you, is the best?

"You gotta say that '...Satisfaction' grabbed the whole thing. But to play? 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' is a killer guitar rock'n'roll riff to play. It just floats there, baby."

If you're ever just sat around at home, on the sofa with a guitar, do you ever just play 'Jumpin' Jack Flash' to yourself?

"Oh yeah. Sometimes just to keep my hand in. But if I sit around and play guitar I play other people's stuff: old Buddy Holly, or Everly Brothers, and just figure out some chords. But usually what happens if you do that, after a little while something else crops up, and then you find you're on the trail of a song somewhere. That's what I do. You sit down and play and, some days, an idea pops up, and you nag it to death."

Speaking of which, the reaction to 'Doom And Gloom' was great. Is there more new Stones music on the way?

"Oh yeah, why not? That's what I mean. We got two tracks there, within a month.

Clockwise from left: Keef onstage at the O2, November 25; Mick Jagger does a Jay Kay (Nov 25) before being out-lunged by Flo (Nov 29)

Anything's possible now. This whole thing just seems to be gathering momentum again. So, at the moment, we've got these shows, and then you're into New Year and I guess everybody's... well, without saying anything, everybody's thinking."

So more gigs? Can you tell us anything?

"There's some more things in the works, definitely, I get the feeling now, yeah."

We keep hearing rumours around these parts about Glastonbury...

"That's a good one. I'm really going to be guilty here of leaving that one up in the air. I mean I'd love to. But look, I don't know ▶

> "FLORENCE GAVE MICK A RUN FOR HIS MONEY. LOVELY GIRL!"
>
> KEITH RICHARDS

The Barrel Tree in Lynchburg, Tennessee. All 140 barrels of it.

THIS YEAR, THE BIGGEST GIFT ISN'T UNDER THE TREE. IT IS THE TREE.

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See the raising of the Barrel Tree at facebook.com/jackdanielsUK or jackdaniels.com

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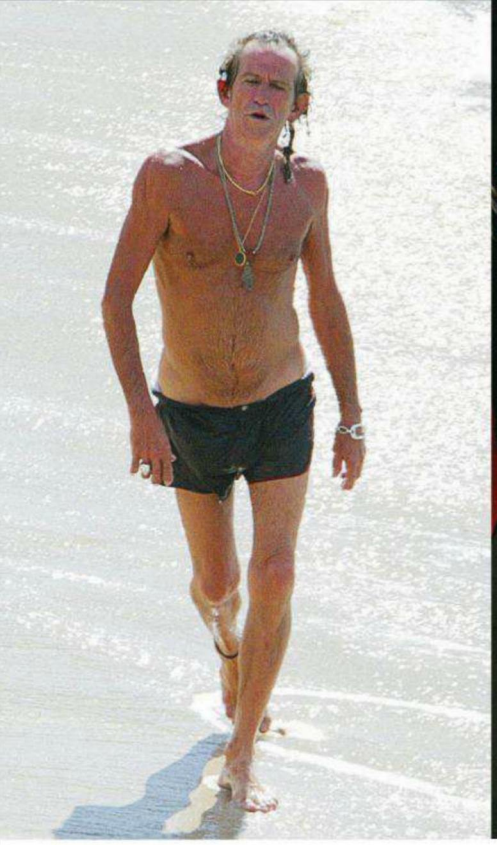


From left: Keef in Jamaica, or 'Mr June' from the Official Keef Calendar 2013; "What fucking joker brought a copy of 'She's The Boss'?": Keith at the London premiere of *Crossfire Hurricane*

"I'D LOVE TO PLAY GLASTONBURY. ANYTHING'S POSSIBLE..."

KEITH RICHARDS

anything about next year at the moment, I really don't. We're just getting this year under our belts. But anything's possible, that's all I can say. But if it could happen, I'd love to."

The Rolling Stones were 50 this year, but *NME* was 60...

"Oh, so you got 10 on me, huh? Heh heh..."

Did you read it when you were younger?

"Yeah man, I probably had the first issue. It was about the time when I was starting to get into music, and into the charts, and musicians and stuff. I guess I started reading it around '57, '58... I was a regular subscriber for many years! And to go from one minute reading it, to the next minute being in it... there were amazing things happening. It all happened at once and you're only 19, and you think you've gone to heaven."

On the second night at the O2 Mick said: "This is close to where Keith and I grew up in Dartford, but it seems a long way from exchanging records at the station."

Have you still got that Bo Diddley record, Keith? Any idea where it is?

"You know what, I think he stole it back. Or Brian Jones nicked it. I could never figure out where it went. When were all living together all the records went into a communal pool..."

I think my 'Sticky Fingers' LP went the same way a few years ago.

"So you know what I mean, right? It became a game of, 'Where's my, where's my...' It was all very communistic when we were starting out as a band."

So what does Keith Richards do for Christmas? Any plans?

"Christmas Day, I'm going down to the islands. I'll see everybody up on New Year's, but on Christmas Eve, I'll get out and get some sun..."

Do the Stones exchange Christmas gifts?

"Oh yeah. Sometimes they don't arrive actually on Christmas, sometimes before, and sometimes afterwards. But we always exchange something. It's normally something you see or you pick up and you think, 'Oh Charlie'll love that.' But it might not be exactly at Christmas, because we're not that punctual!"

So what's the best gift Charlie, Ronnie or Mick has ever given you?

"Wow, that's a rough one. Let me think... Charlie's given me some incredible things over the years, but they're silly things, like in-jokes and stuff. I can't remember the best one I got, but I remember I once found a Biggles puppet, with a parachute, beautiful '20s job with all the gear on. And Charlie and I have always had a thing about Biggles, so I sent him that. It's still dangling from his ceiling somewhere."

What's the wildest Christmas you've ever had?

"Oh Christmases, I don't remember a lot of them. Because if it's a good one, you're not allowed to really, are you? Heh heh heh!"

KEEF'S CHRISTMAS DAY?

This is how we reckon it might pan out

3PM

A snoring Keef is awoken by the friendly lick of a heavily tattooed cow wearing a Santa beard (how'd that get in here?). Keef soon realises that not only is he upside-down, but that his famously labrythine hair has become horribly entangled in his Christmas tree.

3.45PM

Following a quick (dozen) cheeky (bottles of) sherry, Keef sets about opening the presents from his bandmates: Charlie Watts – hooray, 200 fags! – Ronnie Wood – hooray, 200 fags! – and Mick Jagger – 10 fags. Cheap git. Keef consoles himself with the mental image of Mick's face as he opens *his* gift: a "Who the fuck is Mick Jagger?" T-shirt, same as every year.

5PM

After smoking a box of Christmas crackers Keef settles down for a Skype chat with Johnny Depp. The conversation seems a little stilted – and is repeatedly interrupted by that elf ponce from off that wizards thing – until Keef realises that he's actually watching BBC One's big Christmas Day film, *Pirates Of The Caribbean 2*.

8PM

A biker-chick gang arrive after an armed raid on a nearby turkey farm, festooned with gobble-gobbling birds and terrified teenage farmhands. Keef pours everyone a festive stocking of flaming brandy, before taking to the guitar to lead a singalong of 'Honky Tonk Snowman'.

11PM

With a start, Keef realises that it's not actually Christmas Day 2012 at all – it's August 15, 1971, and he's in a five-star motel in Texas, utterly off his tit-margins on mescaline milkshakes and PCP soup. Woah. And how'd this far-out cow get in here...?

KEEF'S CHRISTMAS WORDS: JOE MADDEN

'TIS THE SEASON TO BE BIFFY

Biffy Clyro like to keep Christmas traditional – when they're not freezing their tats off onstage, that is

The festive chest expander was a big hit with the boys

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR CHRISTMAS?

James Johnston, bass: "We've spent quite a lot of time away from home this year making the record, and that places more importance on family. So it'll be a fairly typical Christmas-jumpers-on affair, sitting in front of the fire. Have a nice meal, probably get the guitars out late at night and have a few whiskies."

WILL YOU WATCH THE QUEEN'S SPEECH?

James: "I like a bit of tradition, and it's one of those times I always think about my grandfather, who's no longer with us, who always used to make us watch the Queen's speech at three o'clock. He'd stand up and salute, which is deeply unfashionable in a way but I kinda like some of those things."

WHAT PRESENTS ARE YOU GETTING THIS YEAR?

James: "I want to get motorcycle glasses. The guys gave me a funny look when I suggested it but I'm gonna go for it. I don't have my licence yet but I'm hoping if I buy all the bits and bobs it'll spur me on to get it next year. I'll have the goggles and the cravat and the big boots but no bike."

WHO GOES MADDEST OVER CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR?

James: "Traditionally that would've been Benny [Johnston, drums] but he's having a bit of a quiet time at the moment, so it's a toss-up between Simon [Neil, singer] and I. Simon had an amazing party last year on Hogmanay. He dressed up as a Norwegian black metaller with his Darkthrone T-shirt on and he put a pillow inside his jersey with face paint all over. Also, a couple of years ago we played the Hogmanay show at Princes Street Gardens in Edinburgh. That was fun to play outdoors with our tops off, seeing everybody else shivering in their jackets. Once we got going it was OK, but it was pretty cold going onstage. Our nipples would've taken your eye out."

WHAT'S YOUR RECIPE FOR THE PERFECT HARD ROCK CHRISTMAS?

James: "Definitely some sort of drink, either Jägermeister or whisky. I don't know if it's that rocking to put on Christmas tunes, but it's a good chance to listen to some of your favourite records you've discovered over the past year and make your parents go, 'What the fuck are you listening to?'"

"OUR NIPPLES WOULD'VE TAKEN YOUR EYE OUT"

JAMES JOHNSTON

INTERVIEW: MARK BEAUMONT PHOTO: ANDY WILLSHER

A VERY MESSY XMAS FROM ...

LUCY ROSE

Lucy, what are the best and worst things you've found in a cracker?
"A bottle opener's always quite a handy one. The worst ones are dice. I don't see what the point of that is, although I used to try to trick my family that I was psychic and I could roll whatever number I wanted. I think I even believed that myself for a while. And the jokes are always brilliant. Knock knock."
Who's there?
"To."
To who?
"To *whom*, surely."
Right. What's the most misjudged present you've ever given?
"I'm really bad at presents. I normally just get books for people, a book that I've really enjoyed this year, and films. My dad once got my mum a Buddha, which didn't go down that well. It was this gigantic steel Buddha and it just had a bow on it. We couldn't even move it, it was ridiculous."
And finally, would you do a song for a John Lewis advert?
"I don't think I'm twee enough for John Lewis."

ROLO TOMASSI

Two words... three syllables... Mighty Bush?

What's your plan for Christmas?

Eva Spence (singer): "There was talk of having a Christmas party in Nottingham, where most of the boys live, with all of our friends."

What will you be buying each other?

Nathan Fairweather (bass): "There's talk of doing a Secret Santa, but I'm really bad at buying gifts."

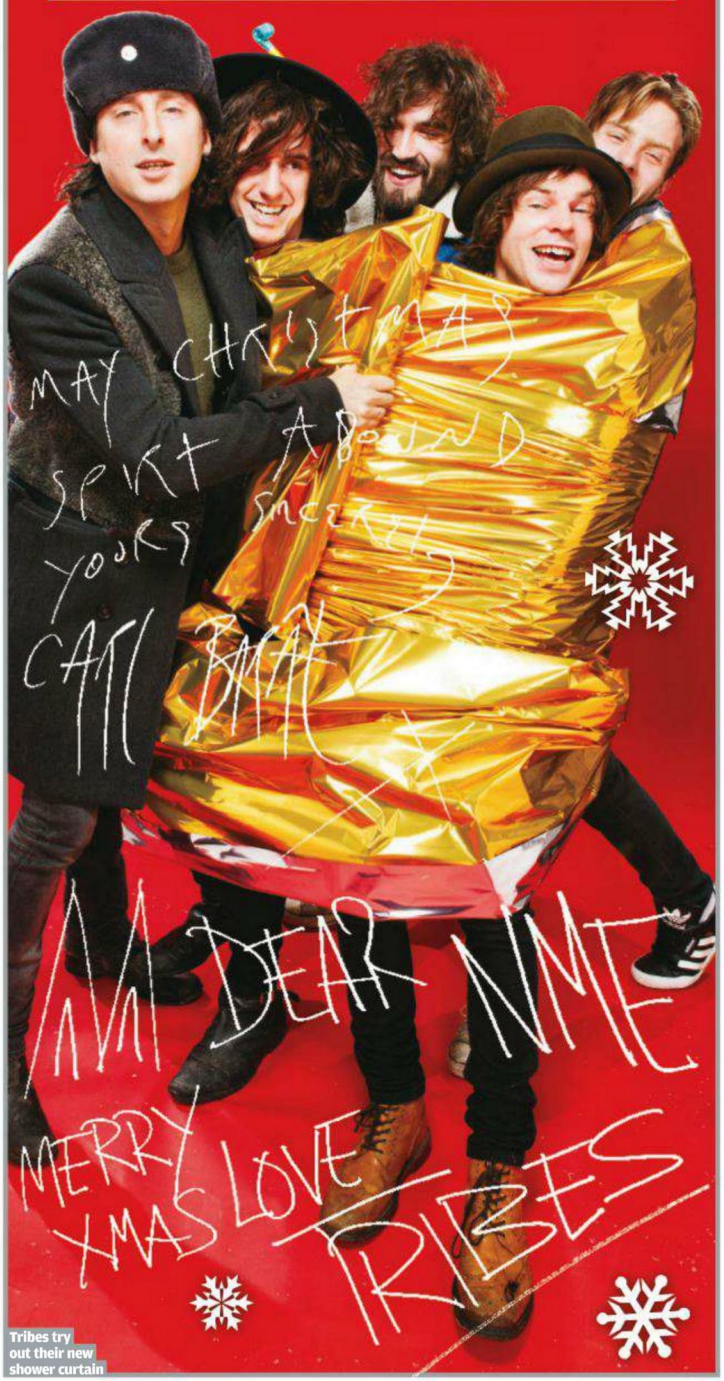
James Spence (synth, vocals): "I'd get Eva a football shirt because she's expressed more of an interest in football, finally, this year. After 22 years of trying to get her involved, she's just about got it. So a big football shirt."

Which celebrity would you have over for Christmas dinner?

Nathan: "There's only one celebrity around Christmas time and that's Michael Bublé. He just *is* Christmas, isn't he? James isn't a fan but me and Chris [Cayford, guitar] were looking at tickets, and they're 70 quid!"

James: "Let's just get Jamie Oliver round to cook dinner."

TRIBES & CARL BARAT



Tribes try out their new shower curtain

What do you imagine each other's Christmases to be like, gents?

Johnny Lloyd, Tribes singer: (*To Carl*) You've got a family now, haven't you?"

Carl: "Yeah, it's about creating the perfect Christmas that I never had for my little 'un. Tribes' Christmas? Do you remember a band called A Tribe Of Toffs? They sang a song called 'John Kettley Is A Weatherman', and the B-side was a song about Christmas Day [*'Festive Frolics From Four Fellows' – Ed*]."

If you were to write a Christmas song together, what would it be like?

Carl: "We could rip off that Tribe Of Toffs one."

Johnny: "It'd be 'All I Want For Christmas Is A Pair Of Rollerblades'."

Will you be inviting each other over for Christmas dinner?

Johnny: "We've just invited him to our Christmas party."

Carl: "That sounds like a rock'n'roll dinner – all the boys are in, bring the crackers!"

PHOTOS: RICHARD JOHNSON PROPS PROVIDED BY THEME TRADERS – PARTIES, PROPS, PRODUCTION. WWW.THEMETRADERS.COM

"FOR OUR XMAS PARTY WE THOUGHT, WHAT WOULD S CLUB 7 DO?"

Palma Violets have been hosting the most debauched gig-parties around in their London basement. What happened when **Dan Martin** helped them host their Christmas bash? Well, ain't no party like a Palmas party...

"You know what we should've done?" cries Sam Fryer, Palma Violets' singer. "The Palma Violets Nativity Scene. That would be really good. With Pete being born, and Harry being Joseph and Chilli being Mary. And Will would be the first goat."

Bassist Chilli Jesson remembers that in *Love, Actually*, there is a lobster who is part of the Nativity, and drummer Will Doyle should be that instead, "and all the A&R men around the country are the Three Kings."

Even without such a Nativity scene, however, things are surreal enough. The four band members, plus henchman Harry Violet (their unofficial fifth member, with no discernible role but a demon at Trivial Pursuit) have a plan in mind. Christmas is a time to party, and since the hottest parties on the circuit are those taking place at their Studio 180 HQ in Lambeth, it figures that putting those two facts together would lead to the party to end them all. And despite it being 4pm, most of the Palmas are drenched in Jägermeister and there's mince pie all over the lovingly assembled Poundland festive scene. This kind of behaviour isn't all that unusual for them, mind.

"We do our studio parties, which are mental," says Chilli, "and then Tom [the owner] just throws parties whenever he feels like."

"We found this place," says Will, "and then we thought, 'You have to do your research'. And there ain't no party like an S Club party, so we thought, 'What would S Club 7 do?' We just replicated that, but instead we used alcohol and real people."

Having taken up residence as the longest-standing of 180's collective of artists ("we stood our ground"), 2012 will mark Palma Violets' first ever Christmas party together.

"Decorations are the *first* thing," says Sam firmly. "You've got to have the perfect Christmas lights. As a band we always have faith in Christmas lights. We have them all year around – they make anything special. And when it isn't snowing we'll just throw polystyrene everywhere and make it look like snow. Or we'll just use our imaginations!"

With booze, they're traditionalists. Sam: "Even if you're in the most depressed of states, mulled wine will be able to cheer you up."

Will: "You see *adults* drinking it all the time, but it's actually really nice. It's not like you can just neck it; it's enjoyable." Will clearly doesn't yet consider himself a grown-up, while everyone else just seems a little disgusted by the idea of Yuletide tipple eggnog ("egg can die" is about the consensus).

As well as booze, animals are an important part of the 180 community. "People have started to bring pets into 180," says Pete, "so you've got to always get the pets involved. Always buy them gifts, never let them feel left out. We always buy our pets presents every year." What kind of animals do you have here? Sam: "There's a big wolfhound, it's actually bigger than Chilli."

> "THE WORST CHRISTMAS GAME IS MONOPOLY. IT RUINS FAMILIES"
>
> PETE MAYHEW, KEYS

Will: "Sam hates dogs. We went away on tour and this lady moved in upstairs, she's a painter and moved this lovely dog in, this Irish wolfhound, so we got back from our last gig and this massive wolf-dog was there."

"And he stole my wallet and ran off with it," says Sam. "So if you see an Irish wolfhound with a wallet then let us know because I fucking had to redo my bank cards and everything."

On the subject of party games, things take a more sinister turn. "I'll tell you what," says Pete, "the worst Christmas game is Monopoly. It ruins families, you get so lethal." The voice of bitter experience? "Well, me and Harry Violet used to be friends," he continues, "but he bought Mayfair and it got ugly. It's always the kids that win. I played my nephew, and they have no fucking morals when it comes down to fucking Monopoly. But then I punched him in the face afterwards. Taught him a lesson."

Chilli awakes from his festive trance with a start at the mention of games, declaring: "With Twister, I've actually got with girls."

"Not at Christmas," protests Sam. "When you're playing with your family it's not the sort of game where you wanna get with someone."

"No, I just pick random people off the street that I fancy," Chilli jokes. "And once I worked in a posh clothes shop and went to the Christmas party and got with all the girls."

All of them? "And a couple of guys too. It's just Twister. You walk in there, couple of drinks, next thing you know, 'You wanna play?' No-one turns you down. Try it, it works wonders."

Is sexytime at a Christmas party necessary or just an added bonus?

Sam: "Well, you have your family Christmas party, and then there's the office Christmas party. Your 'Boffice' Christmas party."

"It all depends how the night's going," says Chilli. "Whether you're in the loving mood."

Nobody really wants to go too far into whether it's better to give or receive at Christmas. The spoilsports. But they know *exactly* who they want as their fantasy party guests [also see boxout].

Will: "I was at a pub and I got introduced to this guy, and it was David Attenborough's nephew. Apparently David is so crude. I would just love to see that side of him. Plus then when he does start talking you could fall asleep."

"I'd like to see him get drunk around the table," says Sam. Will: "He'd be out in the garden drunk, like, 'What we have here is a thousand years worth of evolutionary... culinary... *stuff*... where is the baster?!'"

Pete: "I think everyone should have David Attenborough over for dinner."

Indeed. Well, David, there's a grotty basement, a band and probably a large Irish wolfhound waiting for you, should you choose to accept the offer.

Head to NME.COM/video to watch Palma Violets' boozy Christmas knees-up

GUEST OF FRIENDS

Chilli Jesson's four ultimate Xmas party invitees

DAVID ATTENBOROUGH
"So I can sit on his lap while he tells me stories."

BEN ROMANS-HOPCRAFT (from touring partners Childhood)
"He's a proper kisser, that one. He loves getting his chops all over things."

ROD STEWART
"Because blondes like to have fun. Especially this one."

ROGER SARGENT, REX, EUAN ROBERTSON

Will, king of the pie money-shot
Chilli and Will (right) look a bit pastry-faced
Merry Christmas
Chilli's a sucker for cheekbones after a drink

THE BEST/WORST CHRISTMAS EVER!

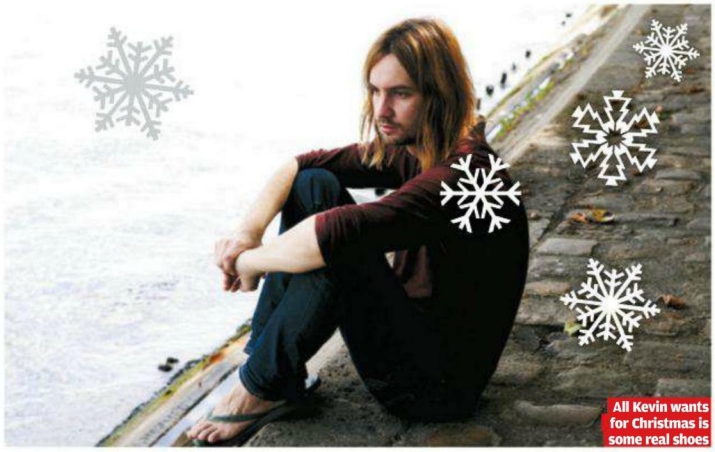
Felix White THE MACCABEES

'Felix' means 'lucky' in Latin. Massive egotist

What's the best present you've ever been given, Felix?
"Last year Hugo [White, Maccabees guitarist and Felix's brother] got me 'O Lucky Man!' on vinyl, which is the Alan Price soundtrack to the film. Records are good presents."
What's the worst one you've ever given someone?
"I bought a friend this bench-pressing weight with a spoon attached to the top so you can eat yourself fit. It's literally just weights with an Ikea spoon welded to the top; I shouldn't have spent so much money on it really. The idea is that even if you're eating ice cream, you're still putting a bit of effort into it."
What's the best Christmas bash you've been to?
"Two years ago when I was living in New Cross, I told my flatmates I was just gonna have a few people round. Jessie Ware turned up at my house with human-height speakers. We ended up having to break in two doors. I took everyone to the fireworks up my road so there were 100 people dragging mud round my house. I've never cleaned so much in my life as I did the next morning."

Kevin Parker TAME IMPALA

Kevin, have you had some great Christmas parties back home in Australia?
"Well, last year we were in Perth because we knew we were gonna be away for a long time touring. So we put on a show with all the Tame Impala family; those times end up being pretty loose. Those of us that didn't run the gauntlet of driving home ended up at the beach, with the sun coming up, all asleep in a hammock in a tree."
What's the best Christmas present you've ever been given?
"My dad bought me an eight-track that I ended up recording the next five years of Tame Impala stuff on. I was only about 16, but that's what I ended up recording the EP and the first album on. I'd had really crappy tape decks before, but it was so terrible I had to divide each MP3 into quarters and put them onto a floppy disc."
And the worst?
"Someone from my family usually gets me something in the shape of a guitar – my stepmum got me a spatula in the shape of a guitar once. I did end up using it on a barbecue, but I remember getting it and thinking, 'You've got to be kidding me'. I don't think I'd ever used a spatula in my life."


All Kevin wants for Christmas is some real shoes

Liam Gallagher BEADY EYE

What's the best Christmas present you've ever had?
"The snow, mate. I'm staring out my window now at Hampstead Heath. It's frosty, but I like that. As long as it's not fucking raining. It's proper Beatles weather. Scarf, long coat, pair of bins... and all is good with the world. But I'd say the best was when I got a John Lennon guitar, off my missus."
What sort?
"Like... the sort you play! Nah, an acoustic, really nice acoustic guitar."
And what's the worst?
"Socks, slippers. I get all that shit."
What are the best and worst presents you've ever bought someone else?
"I reckon Our Kid has had a few good presents off me over the years... but I'm pretty good at getting people presents in general. I get in there. They get fuck all off me all year, so I sort of make up for it at the end. You're not getting anything off me, though!"
Well, just as long as we know where we stand. And what's the best Christmas party you've ever been to?
"I reckon it's still to come, man. I can't remember off the top of my head, but I always have a good time at Christmas, definitely. I've got a gaff in New York now, so I'm out there this time. In fact, I've spent a couple of good Christmases out there before; that's how I got the taste for it. I've got some unfinished business over there, as they say in the spirit world."

"Pair of bins", model's own

"MY WORST PRESENTS? SOCKS, SLIPPERS, ALL THAT SHIT"
LIAM GALLAGHER

Aluna Francis

ALUNAGEORGE

What's the best Christmas present you've ever received?

"My mum bought me a sewing machine when I was little and I thought it was the coolest thing in the world. I'm really bad at sewing but I can't keep my hands off stuff. I made a patchwork quilt with my best friend, that was pretty cool."

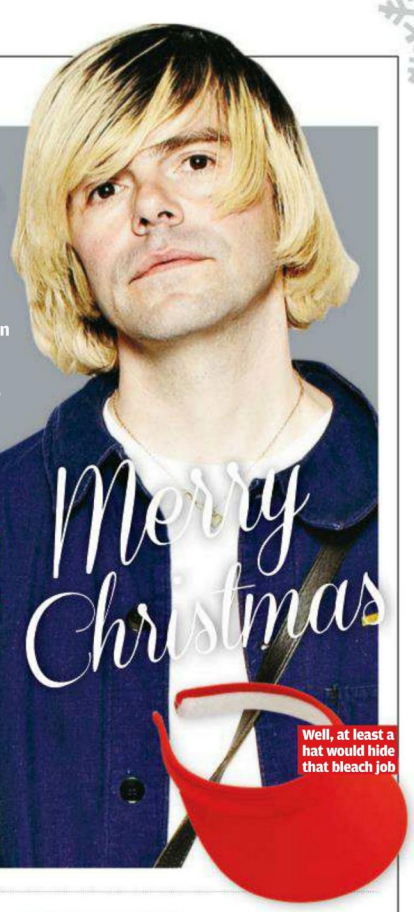
And the worst you've received?

"My gran bought me a concrete cat – just that outdoor, grey concrete – because I really wanted a real cat. She told me she'd got me one and I was beside myself with excitement and then there was this grey concrete thing outside."

What's the best Christmas present you've given someone else?

"Last year I reserved rooms at a beauty parlour for my family and friends and they all got massages. No-one's getting presents this year – just a burnt CD of my music and a printed picture of my face."

Tim Burgess



Well, at least a hat would hide that bleach job

Bet you've been given some good presents in your time, Tim? What's the best?

"I always get great jumpers. I ask for crazy ones so it's about how good they can be. I got a really good mohair one once, that was probably the best. I got an early Christmas present this year which was *Copendium*, the Julian Cope book – that's good too."

What's the worst present you've been given?

"I got a picture once from a fan – that's pretty mean, picking on a fan, isn't it? – and it was the Mona Lisa smoking a joint. I think they thought it was interesting, but obviously it wasn't."

And the best present you've given someone else?

"Maybe a sun visor? I think that's the best but it's probably the worst because it's Christmassy and snowing. I always think that onesies are pretty good presents, or a nice jumper; maybe it's because it makes me think of 'Last Christmas' by Wham!. People just get in the mood with that – keeps you warm and it's practical. I'm going to be the practical man of this Christmas issue."

> "ONESIES MAKE PRETTY GOOD PRESENTS"
>
> TIM BURGESS

Guy Garvey ELBOW

What's the worst present you've ever given anyone?

"I bought my missus an electric blanket once. I said 'I'm gonna be away a lot', and then I split up with her for seven years! It was pretty bad."

Did you buy her a great gift to atone for it?

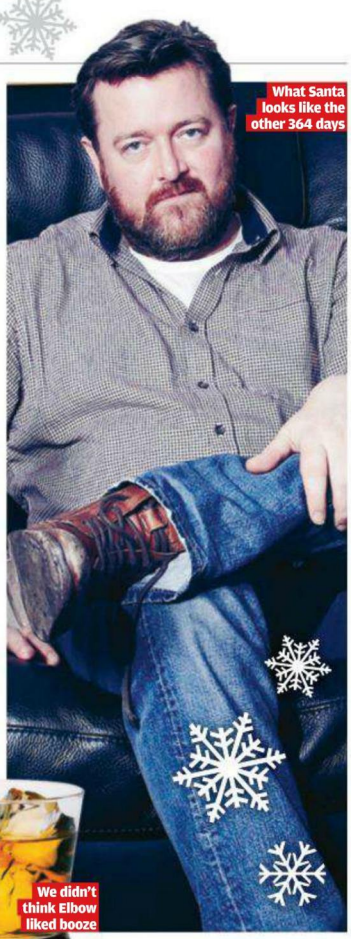
"I need to balance my public image now... I bought her a public access course at Manchester Uni that was on astrophysics because she loves her science."

Well saved. What's the worst Christmas party you've been to?

"I spent Christmas Day once in a bedsit, alone, listening to 'Attack Of The Grey Lantern' by Mansun. All I had was that record and a bottle of Jameson. I don't think I went near a human woman for about 18 months at that point. I was living with Pete, our drummer, and he'd gone home for Christmas so I was left there and it was a kind of self-flagellation thing – like, 'Fuck Christmas, fuck the world, I'm gonna do this on my own'. It put me off Mansun forever. Jameson is still a very good friend."

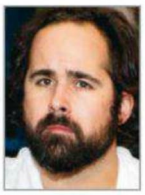
So... not exactly a party. And the best?

"Me and [wife] Emma had a New Year's Eve party. We managed to get 140 people in a one-bedroom flat. I'd bought a big rocket to set off on the balcony at midnight and there was so little space I had to light it and turn my head away. I ended up with scorch marks on my clothes."



What Santa looks like the other 364 days

We didn't think Elbow liked booze



Ronnie Vannucci

THE KILLERS

Ronnie, have you been to any amazing Christmas parties?

"Every year for a while this character we know called Michael Valentine and his brother have a party. They host these parties on Christmas night where bands would play and everyone would take food or drinks and tear up the house until New Year's Eve."

What's the best gift you've been given?

"A drumkit when I was seven or something like that. I was one of those kids that would disappear in the garage and beat on the washer and refrigerator for hours. My parents were like, 'He's been doing this for a couple of years now, let's buy him a fucking drumkit'."

And the worst?

"I was 18, my mom and dad got me a cheese-cutting board and a pair of socks and a really large flannel."

What's the worst Christmas gift you've given anyone else?

"When I was dating one girlfriend – this is young Vannucci – I didn't know what to get girls. I got her soap and I think it sent the wrong message. Now I know what girls want – money and a place in my will."

Orlando Weeks

THE MACCABEES

What's the worst present you've ever given anyone, Orlando?

"I gave my brother a book from a charity shop, and I didn't notice that it had the price tag still on. I don't know if he read it, but he definitely commented on the price."

And the best?

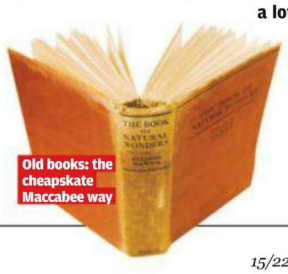
"There are no particularly good ones that I can think of. I'm better at birthdays than Christmas – it's too much pressure."

What's the worst present you've received?

"I'm pretty sure I got that book back. I knew exactly what he was saying with that one."

Depressing. But what's the best Christmas party you've been to?

"There was a Christmas when I was three and we'd just got a swing and it snowed. You know those memories where you can't quite decide whether it's a real memory or it's just a photo you've seen a lot? That's where I'm at with this. That's gotta be up there I reckon."



Old books: the cheapskate Maccabee way

Turn to page 36 to see Orlando's specially designed Christmas card

ANDY WHITTON, DAVID EDWARDS, DEAN CHALKLEY RICHARD JOHNSON, ED MILES, ALAMY

NME PUB CHALLENGE 2012

What do you get when you mix six indie godheads, shedloads of booze and this magazine's annual test of skill and dexterity? Mayhem and nudity, of course. Your host with the tab: **Emily Mackay**

RUNNERS AND RIDERS

Who's who in our boozy challenge

JEN LONG, BBC RADIO 1
Will you win?
"I'm more up for the taking part, that's what counts. I'm going to really embarrass myself."
Poison of choice:
Whatever's cheapest

SHANE PARSONS, DZ DEATHRAYS
Will you win?
"I'll be behind Simon. No, that's not fighting talk, is it? OK. I'm gonna sabotage Simon."
Poison of choice:
Sailor Jerry

KEVIN CURRAN, THE CAST OF CHEERS
Will you win?
"Well, there's quizzes and the like and I'm just off tour. But I'm Irish, so, maybe I'll have a chance."
Poison of choice:
A fine bitter

DREW MCCONNELL, BABYSHAMBLES
Will you win?
"I haven't got a competitive nature, so I don't fancy my chances. I've just had spinal surgery, so if I fall, I'll break."
Poison of choice:
Scotch and soda

PAUL 'BONEHEAD' ARTHURS, PARLOUR FLAMES, EX-OASIS
Will you win?
"Not a chance. I might get ahead in the mental rounds."
Poison of choice:
Drunk four pints before we started

SIMON RIDLEY, DZ DEATHRAYS
Will you win?
"I have no idea. In a thing like this, you have to watch out for dark horses. But it's too early to say."
Poison of choice:
Scotch and ginger

There's only one way to truly see out another recession-soaked old year, and that's to drown it in a lake of booze and then use the leftover fluid to christen the new one. That's why we gather together the finest, fittest and sharpest of the music world to compete annually in noble games of skill and strength round the rockin' boozin' establishments of London. Joining us this year are former Oasis guitarist and total hero Paul 'Bonehead' Arthurs ("Even me kids call me Bonehead," he assures us), hard-rocking Aussies Shane Parsons and Simon Ridley, aka DZ Deathrays, Drew McConnell, gentleman of Babyshambles, Jen Long, Welsh tigress and BBC Radio 1 DJ, and, due to a last-minute substitution in which their singer Conor Adams suddenly realised his hair urgently needed a wash, drummer Kevin Curran from The Cast Of Cheers. How do we assemble such dream teams, year after year, you ask us? We don't even know ourselves. Now, as Bane would say, LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

ROUND ONE

As bystanders in Britpop HQ The Good Mixer in Camden look on with a mixture of amusement and dawning horror, we deploy our Post-It Notes to the heads of our contestants for a round of 20 Questions, soundtracked by howls of fiendish laughter as everyone sees what the others have been lumbered with. Bonehead has to guess Noel Gallagher. "Am I a musician?" Nods. "Am

A drunk Bonehead hatched a plan to get off with Jen

DAN DENNISON

I short?" Furious nods. "A short rock star. Bono?" He gets there in the end, while Drew comes a cropper on account of believing that his brother-in-cheekbones Robert Pattinson is American. Simon gets so close to Robbie Williams we can taste it. "Do you want a massive clue?" offers Bonehead. "His best mate's fat. With nothing better to do than TV talent shows." Shane does remarkably well on Nick Clegg. Having established that he's a politician, he asks "Do I run the country?": cue confused squints and gales of laughter. We give him a conciliatory 10 points for downing his pint, give everyone else one for downing a shot, and so it stands at Shane 11, Bonehead 6, Kev 6, Jen 5, Drew 1, Simon 1.

With volume and spirits creeping ever higher, we swan off to The World's End. Bonehead's keen to score any extra points he can for rock'n'roll behaviour, including literally stopping the traffic. "What about if I fake a heart attack later? I'm only here for the points." Quick, get 'em inside!

ROUND TWO

In Camden's biggest pub, there's a test of bicep prowess in the form of some good old-fashioned arm-wrestling. Bonehead's talking a good game, boasting of how he has

> "WHAT IF I FAKE A HEART ATTACK? I'M ONLY HERE FOR THE POINTS"
>
> BONEHEAD

strong arms as he used to be a plasterer. Drew, meanwhile, has a rather solid doctor's note in the form of recent spinal surgery, so it's left to me to step in, being drawn from the hat first against Bonehead. "You have to want it," Drew urges encouragingly, massaging my shoulders. I get totally mutilated, but feel a bit better when Bonehead's plastering/plastered arm-strength sees off all comers to emerge the final victor. His last battle, with Kev, is a tense one. "Oof, like two gorillas mating," puffs Bonehead. "Come on, I'm gonna 'ave ya." He comes away with 20 points, with 15 to runner-up Kev and 10 to Simon.

It's not over yet, though; next up we have the original social torture, Twister. Limbs go everywhere. "I did Knebworth!" yells an aggrieved Bonehead, throwing in the towel. "I'm colour blind!" It ends with a seemingly endless and quite terrifyingly bendy arse-off between Shane and Kev. "I'm getting myself into a fucking compromise here," mutters Kev, before Shane snakes one limber ankle between his legs. Kev finally emerges with 20 points, as does, surprisingly, the very game Mr Drew McConnell, opting to do his own stunts for the Twister round. Shane and Jen get 15, Bonehead and Simon 10.

And now, it's time to march up the road to the famed Dublin Castle, to rest tired limbs and exercise those brains. On the way, Bonehead tells us that Liam might come down. Of course. Well, Rihanna's playing up the road as well, why not get the whole crew together?

GOOD PUB GUIDE

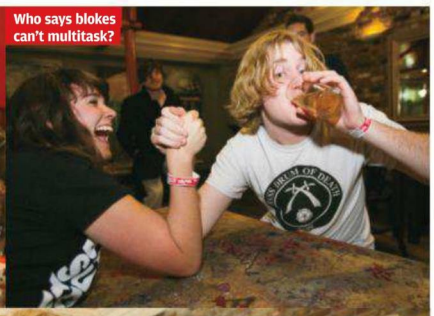
The fine Camden establishments we visited this year

THE GOOD MIXER
Best for: Playing pool with famous indie types. This was one of Amy Winehouse's favourite old haunts too
Address: 30 Inverness Street

THE WORLD'S END
Best for: Rocking out to Slipknot – they played 'Iowa' in full while we were there
Address: 174 Camden High St

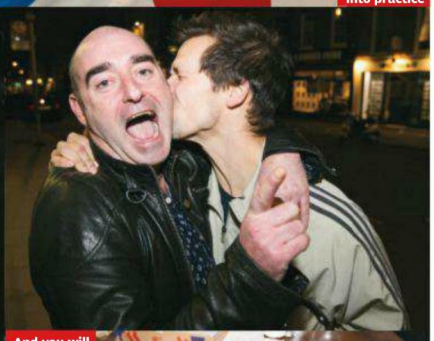
THE DUBLIN CASTLE
Best for: Ska introductions. Suggs answered the phone when we rang recently
Address: 94 Parkway

THE LOCK TAVERN
Best for: Feeling ugly; they've got some kind of bar staff recruitment deal with an Urban Outfitters-affiliated model agency, right?
Address: 35 Chalk Farm Road



Who says blokes can't multitask?

Simon puts the DZ Deathrays line-dance routine into practice



And you will know us by the trail of shite...

ROUND THREE

We gather round a table in the comforting low red light of the Castle for the deceptively simple sounding game of 20 Things: we shout a category like 'cheese', and our victims have to name 20 items in that category without error, fumble or hestitation. Bonehead is up first with singers. "Liam Gallagher, Noel

Gallagher...” Well, start with what you know, eh? He actually does very well, coming away with 20 points. Drew, lucky enough to land the category of animals, gets 19. Jen, getting books, only manages five (“I’ve read loads of books!” she protests after). Simon and Kev scrape a respectable 10 and 11, while Shane

> “I’M JUST TRYING TO THROW MY LOAD RIGHT IN YOUR MOUTH”
>
> BONEHEAD

only manages four on actors. (“Brad Pitt, Angelina Jolie, Robin Williams, fuckin’... what’sisname”). By this point, claims are getting grandiose, secrets are being confided and eyes are rapidly losing their focus. Time to hoof it on to our final port of call, the luscious Lock Tavern.

ROUND FOUR

Well, it was *supposed* to be beer mat flipping, but it seems that nobody uses the bloody things any more. Shane is incensed, and tries to convince his publicist to authorise promotional DZ Deathrays beer mats. “You know what else we should do?” he says. “A DZ Tamagotchi, and you have to keep feeding it Jäger, and then you try and feed it rhubarb but it doesn’t like rhubarb, so it would die. There’s a way into every brain. I did a bachelor’s degree in marketing and promotion.”

Riiiight. Emergency supplies are purchased, so we begin our impromptu round of Throw The Jelly Bean In The Other Person’s Mouth. It’s possibly a bad point in the evening for hand-eye coordination, and everyone proves to be quite terrible at this. Simon dubiously tries to claim that “chest hair counts”, while Bonehead replies, “There’s nothing gay about this, I’m just trying to throw my load right in your mouth.” Jen Long comes off best, with 10 points. Bonehead, Kev and Drew come away with nothing, while Simon and Shane manage four and two respectively.

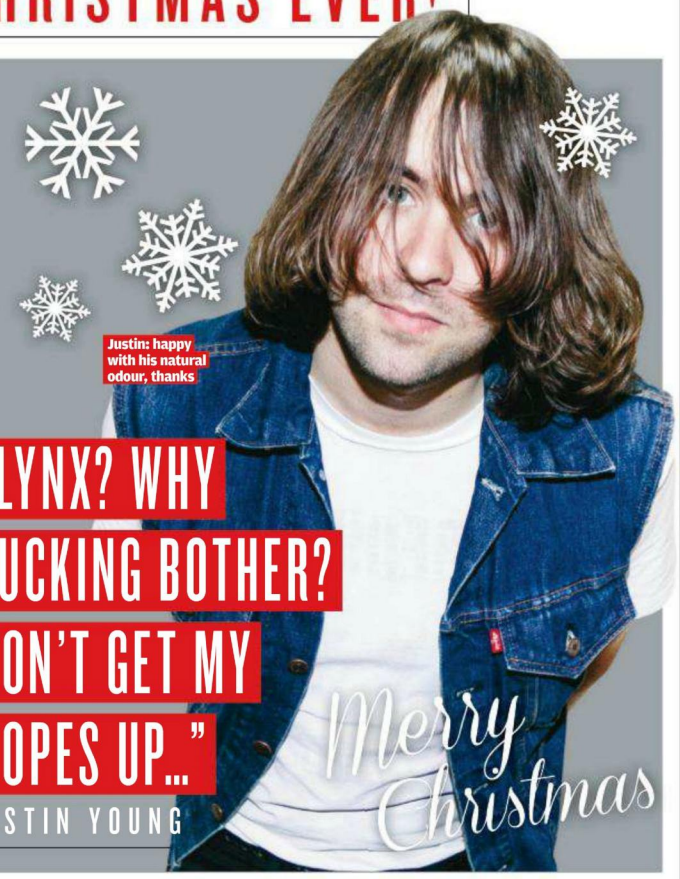
Jen’s taxi driver forgot one thing: his taxi

Everyone gets some time to think about what they’ve done as the totals are totted up. It’s a massive drummer-off, with Kev and Simon level pegging. To break the deadlock, we decide to award 20 points to whoever gets naked and runs up and down the road outside. Kev leaves off propping up the bar to strip his upper half and go for a jog. He comes back in to be informed that when we say naked, we do not mean Biffy Clyro-naked. We don’t think for a second he’s actually going to do the bottom half, but then... heavens! Avert your eyes, ladies and gentlemen! It is The Cast Of Rears! “I hate my job,” mutters *NME* photographer Dan as Kev bounds outside as unburdened by shame as a newborn lamb, tossing the trophy skyward to smash into a million pieces. Words of victory are few and mumbled, but we can make out, “My band and my girlfriend are going to kill me.”

Such, my friend, is the price of victory.

Kev ensured the evening’s end was the dog and bollocks

Justin Young
THE VACCINES



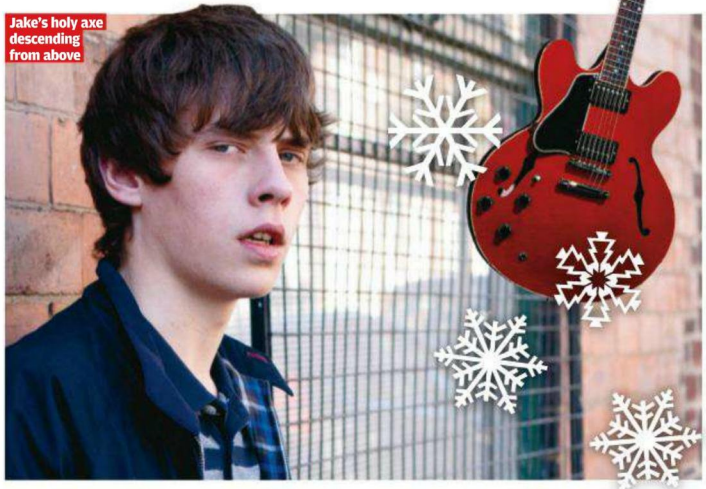
Justin: happy with his natural odour, thanks

"LYNX? WHY FUCKING BOTHER? DON'T GET MY HOPES UP..."
JUSTIN YOUNG

Justin, what's the best Christmas bash you've ever gone to?
"Well, I don't like New Year's Eve – it's like forced fun. It's the one night where everyone is expected to go bigger than they do for the rest of the year. We had a really good time doing Hogmanay last year in Edinburgh though, and we're gonna be in Tasmania this year which I imagine will be pretty fucking fun."
Well, do try and enjoy yourself. What's the worst you've been to?
"There have definitely been a couple of New Years where I've been in bed before 12. I was making a stand – it's maybe not the most admirable protest in human history but it made me feel better about myself. Maybe that was a good one. My idea of a good New Year's Eve is just *Jools' Hootenany*."
Have your bandmates ever got you any decent pressies?
"I've definitely had some fucking pretty sweet presents in my time... the band got me an iPad so that was pretty good. It was quite fancy, I was happy with that."
And what's the worst Christmas present you've been given?
"It annoys me when you get things like deodorant – Lynx. Why fucking bother? Save the energy and the time and money, and don't allow me to get my hopes up. People are sneaky – they conceal things in boxes..."
And the worst present you've ever given anyone?
"I felt bad when we did our Secret Santa and I got something amazing, and I'm pretty sure I gave Arni [Hjörvar, bassist] a DVD of *Blue Planet* or something. It definitely wasn't evenly weighted. It was a nice present, but maybe it wasn't the same..."

Jake Bugg

Jake! Have you been to some great Christmas parties in your time?
"I don't really know. It's just about having a few drinks, isn't it? The whole point of having Christmas parties is that you get drunk and don't remember."
Indeed. What's the best Christmas present you've ever had?
"It's got to be my first electric guitar. I was about 13, and I knew I was getting it but it was still really exciting. I'd been playing acoustic before but it was exciting to start playing electric; it allows you to play different styles and play different things. It's a lot of fun as well, you know?"
And the worst?
"The worst present I've ever heard of – I didn't get it – was a bass wah pedal. It's just shit. Why? Because... it's just not right! It's a wah pedal for a bass guitar! My bass player got one of them once – it wasn't from me."


Jake's holy axe descending from above

Blaine Harrison
MYSTERY JETS

Blaine! What's the best Christmas present you've ever been given?
"I got my first guitar for Christmas... actually, that's a lie, my sister got it and I got a Transformer or something. But she didn't show much interest so I stole it off her and became a musician by accident."
And the best one you've ever given out?
"When I was an art student I used to make big scrapbooks with secret pockets and pop-up pages. You know like what you give a baby where some of the pages are furry and some are squidgy? I used to make adult versions of those."
And the worst?
"Before we got signed, when we were flirting with different record labels, we used to get boxes of CDs and I used to give them out to people all the time, but there's worse presents than a CD!"

CDs are fine presents, Blaine – if you BUY 'em

Tom Morello
RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE

What's the best Christmas present you've ever been given, Tom?
"'Killing In The Name' being Number One [in 2009, after a campaign to thwart Joe McElderry] was a pretty good one a couple of years ago. It was a rebel Christmas miracle!"
And the worst present you've had?
"In college we did Secret Santa. My present was a Snickers bar. I wasn't looking for diamonds or jewellery, but it felt like my Secret Santa didn't care so much about me."
And the best present you ever gave?
"You probably wouldn't want that printed in your magazine. Let's just say it was a gift for someone very close to me."
What's your best-ever Christmas party?
"It happened a few months after Christmas, but it was the Finsbury Park victory party. That show was about the fans. It was about the power of what music can really do. For every Goliath there's a David. Our song was the stone in the sling. It was awesome to celebrate that with all of you."

DAN DENNISON, ANDY WILLSHER, RICHARD JOHNSON

A VERY MESSY XMAS FROM ...

TWO DOOR CINEMA CLUB & BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB

Two Door Bicycle Bombay Cinema Club: (l-r) Alex, Jamie, Kevin, Suren and Sam. (Sitting) Ed and Jack

What would you two get each other for Christmas?

Jack Steadman (BBC singer/guitar): "A remote-control helicopter. Although they're hard to control."

Alex Trimble (TDCC singer/guitar): "I'd buy Jack a nice jumper, because you were lacking one today."

Jack: "That's true, I was left out today. That's a very thoughtful gift."

What do you imagine the other Club's Christmas would be like?

Jack: "Cosy, well-decorated, homely and with a good, well-stocked bar."

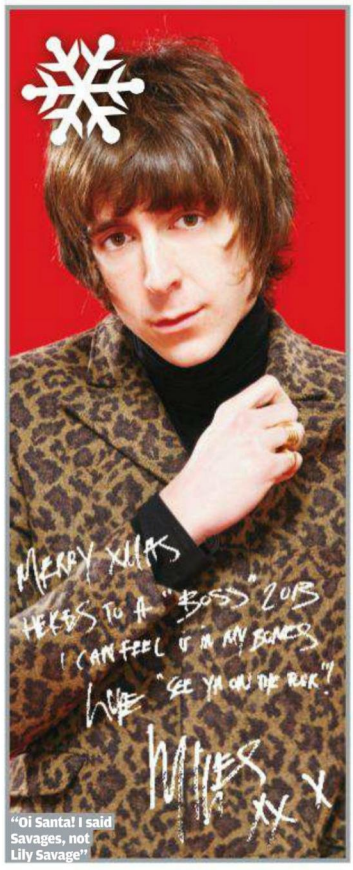
Alex: "I would expect handmade Christmas cards from BBC."

Jack: "Ed [Nash, bass] is an artist so I'd imagine he'd be making some sort of homemade gift."

Which celebrity would you have as a guest at your Christmas table?

Alex: "Jesus, naturally."

Jack: "Was that an exclamation or an answer?"



"Oi Santa! I said Savages, not Lily Savage"

MILES KANE

What are your plans for Christmas, Miles?

"After we do this gig at Christmas with Weller in Hammersmith on December 19, I'm probably going to go back up to Liverpool and spend it with my family. My mum's coming down for the gig; we'll have a nice couple of nights in London, then I'll go back up with her."

What are the best and worst things you've found in a cracker?

"I always get the nail clippers. I don't know if that's good or bad. Actually, they do come in handy."

How would you feel about being Christmas Number One?

"I'd love it, I'm not gonna lie! Maybe one day."

Which celebrity would you like to swap Christmases with?

"Jack White would be an interesting one. I don't know how he'd do it but I'd like to swap with him to see how he'd do it."

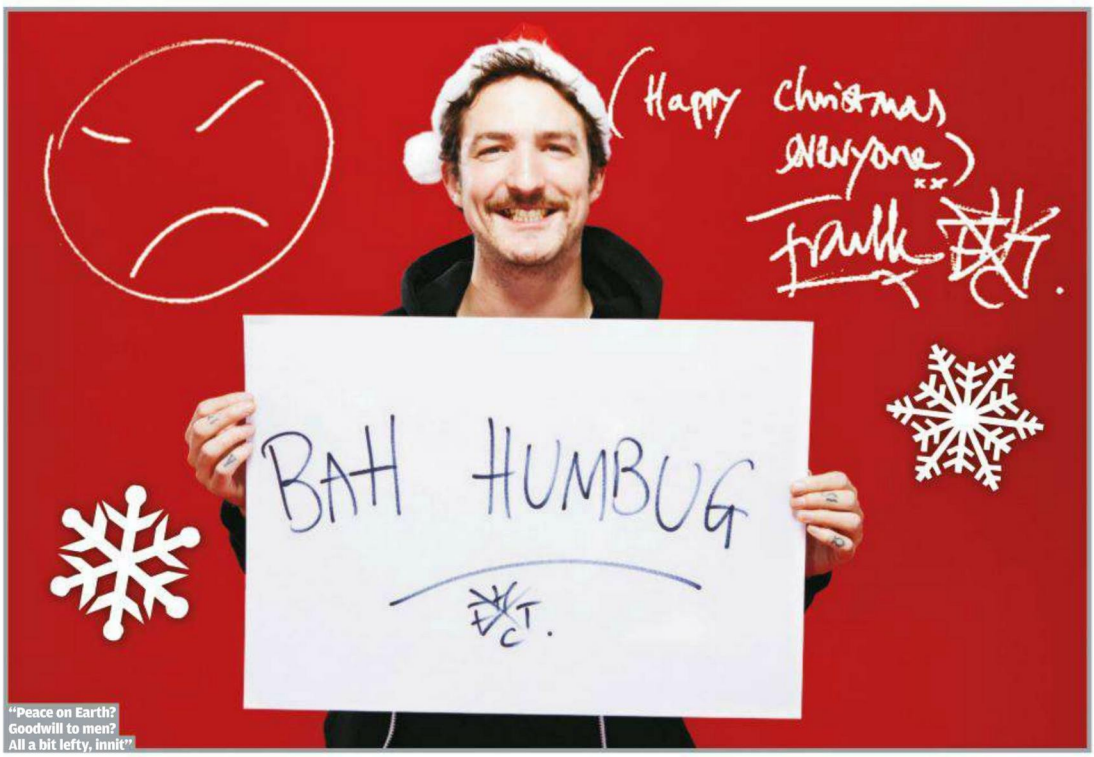
And how would you put together the most rock'n'roll Christmas?

"With Liam Gallagher and Liam Howlett - we'd do a lot of naughty things."

THE 2 BEARS

How would you make the most '2 Bears' Christmas, gents?
Joe: "You'd have to have it in a wood, in a cave. Huddling, trying to keep warm by cuddling each other."
Kind of *Bearback Mountain*?
Raf: "It'd be a wholesome festival. We'd maybe replace the Jesus imagery with a bunch of classic house DJs. You could have the likes of Larry Levan and Frankie Knuckles. But you'd basically steal some picnic baskets and serve them up in an enchanted wood."
What's the drunkest you've ever got at Christmas?
Raf: "One Christmas Eve I got so incredibly drunk that I vomited all over the Christmas dinner table the following day. We used to stay at my auntie and uncle's and my uncle was the local doctor in his neck of the woods in Scotland, so everyone gave him a bottle of whisky at Christmas. However, he was knocking on a bit and he had a terrible stomach ulcer so he couldn't drink any of it, so me and my cousins decided to get stuck in, and it has to be said that it really had disastrous consequences. I vomited in the bread sauce bowl. It was quite local though, it wasn't a spray-off."

"Fuck off! I only came to promote Diet Coke"



"Peace on Earth? Goodwill to men? All a bit lefty, innit"

FRANK TURNER

How will you be celebrating Christmas this year, Frank?
"It's been a big year for me, and it's wrapping up pretty amazingly with the Pogues show we're doing at the O2 Arena in London on December 20. As far as I'm concerned The Pogues' Christmas shows are a national institution – they're more important to me than the Last Night Of The Proms."
What's the drunkest you've ever been at Christmas?
"I do get pretty drunk at Christmas. Once when I was living in Winchester back in the day I got super-hammered in the pub on Christmas Eve, and I decided to go and kneel to receive communion in the cathedral. Eventually I'm like, 'Oh fuck! What is going on here?' Everyone was at the back of the cathedral laughing at me. I felt a bit bad about it because obviously some people were taking it really seriously, but I was essentially being a drunken anus in a cathedral."

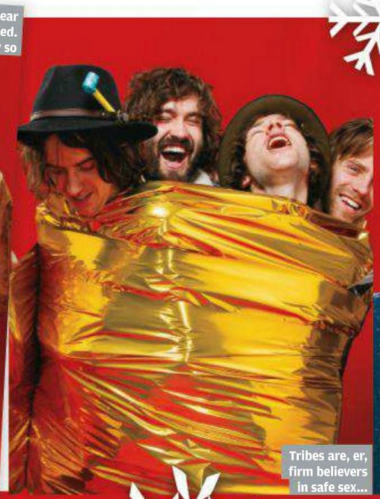
PHOTOS: RICHARD JOHNSON PROPS PROVIDED BY THEME TRADERS – PARTIES, PROPS, PRODUCTION. WWW.THEMETRADERS.COM THANKS TO ASOS FOR SUPPLYING THE FESTIVE KNITWEAR

EXTRA HELPINGS

Here's some more seasonal snaps from when this lot came into the office for our Xmas photoshoots – head to NME.COM/video for behind-the-scenes footage

Bombay Bicycle Club got off their sleds

The third bear looks worried. And rightly so


Tribes are, er, firm believers in safe sex...

...while Two Door are really into safe sleds

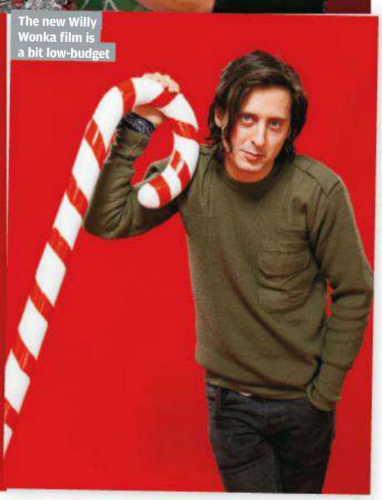
"No! Don't waste all of our drugs for later!"

Rolo Tomassi look like a cheery bunch...

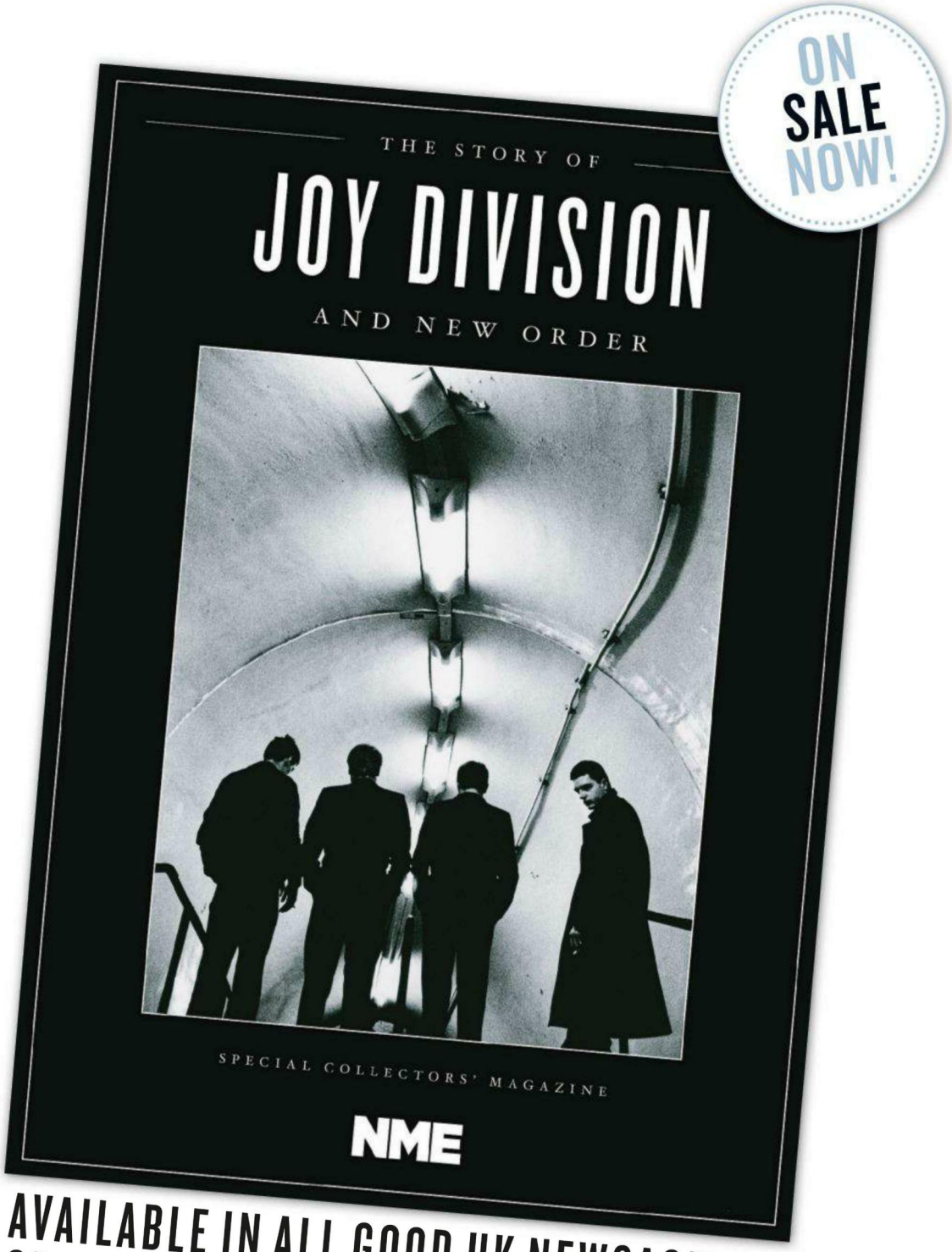
...but give them a fake tree in November and they're ecstatic

Kane models woman at C&A (circa 1966)...

...Barât and Turner (right) model the BHS Crimbo range


The new Willy Wonka film is a bit low-budget

PHOTOS: RICHARD JOHNSON PROPS PROVIDED BY THEME TRADERS – PARTIES, PROPS, PRODUCTION. WWW.THEMETRADERS.COM THANKS TO ASOS FOR SUPPLYING THE FESTIVE KNITWEAR



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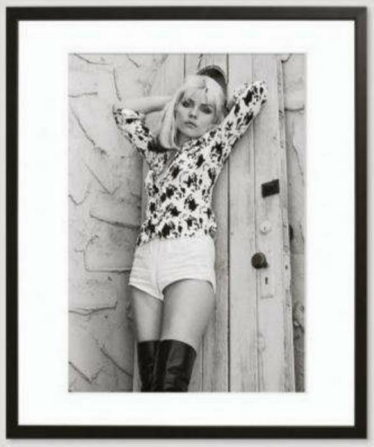

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Example

"I WATCHED THE FIREWORKS THEN HAD SEX ON THE BEACH"

EXAMPLE

What's the worst Christmas party you've ever been to?
"At the millennium, me and my friend spent the whole night trying to get into a pub and we couldn't get into any of them. When we finally got into one somewhere in Fulham Broadway, I stepped on a bloke's shoe, thought nothing of it, went to the bar and then he cut my arm with a knife he had. He was like, 'If you scuff my shoe, I'm gonna cut you up'. So when people ask about the millennium, some people think of Robbie Williams, but I think of bandaging my arm because I trod on some Patrick Cox knock-offs. I did punch him and run though."

And the best?
"That was when I was in Sydney in 2004. I went out to four or five different parties, just randomly knocking on doors, met loads of people, watched the fireworks on Sydney Harbour Bridge and then had sex with a girl from the Czech Republic on the beach. I kissed one girl on top of a washing machine, went to another party and was in a Jacuzzi, went to another one where there was this DJ and I started rapping, and then I met that Czech girl and went to the beach. I don't think you can have a better New Year's Eve."

And the best present you've received?
"My girlfriend got me a shark dive, like when you're in the tank with them. I'm obsessed and terrified of sharks in equal amounts, so that was pretty cool. Even thinking about it now makes me shiver."

Example stars in a spin-off of *Sharky & George*

ANDY WILLSHER, DAN KENDALL, REX FEATURES

The prototype iPhone was cumbersome

Gary Jarman

THE CRIBS

Gary! What's the best Christmas present you've received?
"I got a four-track recorder for Christmas in 1996 and it quite simply changed my life. Being able to record at home was such a big thing for me and Ryan and that entire Christmas period we didn't go out, we just stayed at home recording on that. That's something that's stuck with me ever since. I've always loved home recording."

What was the worst Christmas party you ever went to?
"I remember when I was about 15, I went to this Christmas party nearby and it was a lot of the more nerdy, preppy kids from school there. One of their parents were out of town and all these kids smoked weed for the first time and couldn't really deal with it. It all got a bit weird. Someone's kid brother was taken into foster care that night I think. It really went downhill."

Frankie Francis

FRANKIE & THE HEARTSTRINGS

Frankie! Have you ever been given a truly terrible Christmas present?
"Yeah, the worst present I got was from a relative. You remember in the late '80s when oversized watches were cool to put on your wall? Well, she got me one of those, but it was from a car boot sale, so it was a bit scruffy and it smelt of cigarettes."

What's the worst one you've ever given yourself?
"When I used to work at a restaurant I bought the smelly cleaner a thong as a joke, but she thought it was a sexual compliment so it went a bit wrong. She can take it however she likes, but it definitely wasn't intended to be a sexual thing..."

Keeping on the negative theme, what's the worst festive party you've ever been to?
"Well, the only bad New Year's Eve party I've had is where I've DJed and no-one's been there, and I've had to be paid off. I've never put a party on where no-one's turned up or someone's died or anything like that."

Austin Williams

SWIM DEEP

What's the best Christmas present you've been given?
"It was when me and my brothers got these guns that shoot foam bullets. That was good."

And the worst?
"Well, I don't think I've ever had a bad Christmas, overall. I love Christmas so much. But to answer the question, my great aunt, bless her soul, used to buy me *Bob The Builder* colouring books up until I was about 18."

The worst Christmas bash?
"Last year we got kicked out of The Old Blue Last [in Shoreditch, London] because Cav [from Swim Deep] was having a wee in a cup. In all fairness they thought he was weeing up the wall, but he's not that kind of guy."

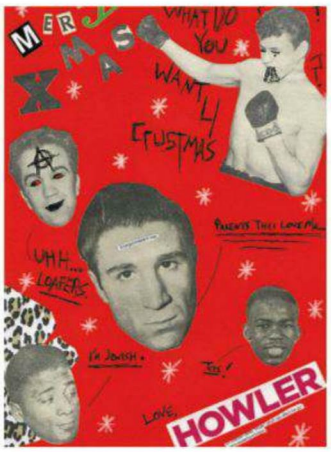
Have you had a better one?
"The best was when I was 17 – I had my first slow dance to an Aerosmith song. No, put that as the worst!"

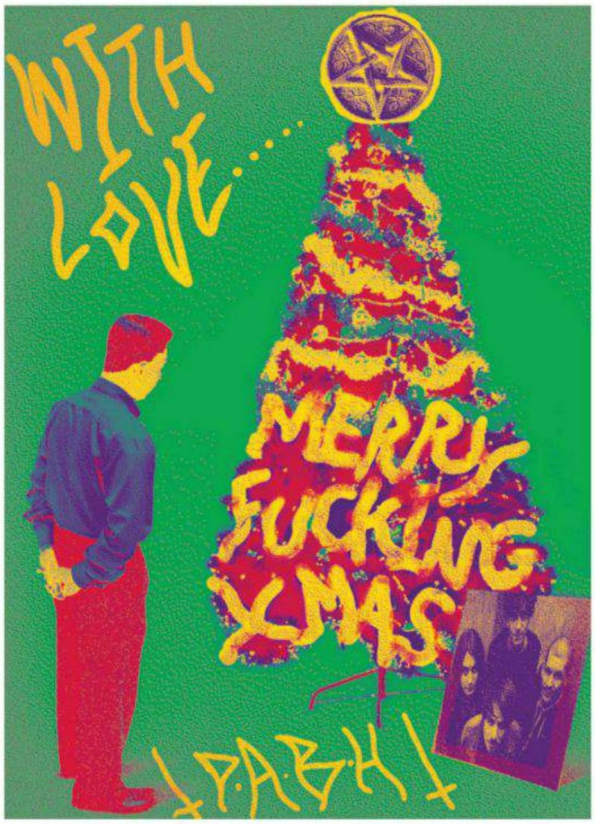
THIS IS CARDCORE! 2

JORDAN GATESMITH ▶

Howler

"I must have been eight years old the last time I crafted a holiday card, and the experience was more or less the same this time around: lots of paper cuts, burning fingers as glue is caught in open wounds, and periodic moments of 'Wait, this *is* my masterpiece'. But finally I can say, Merry Crustmas!"

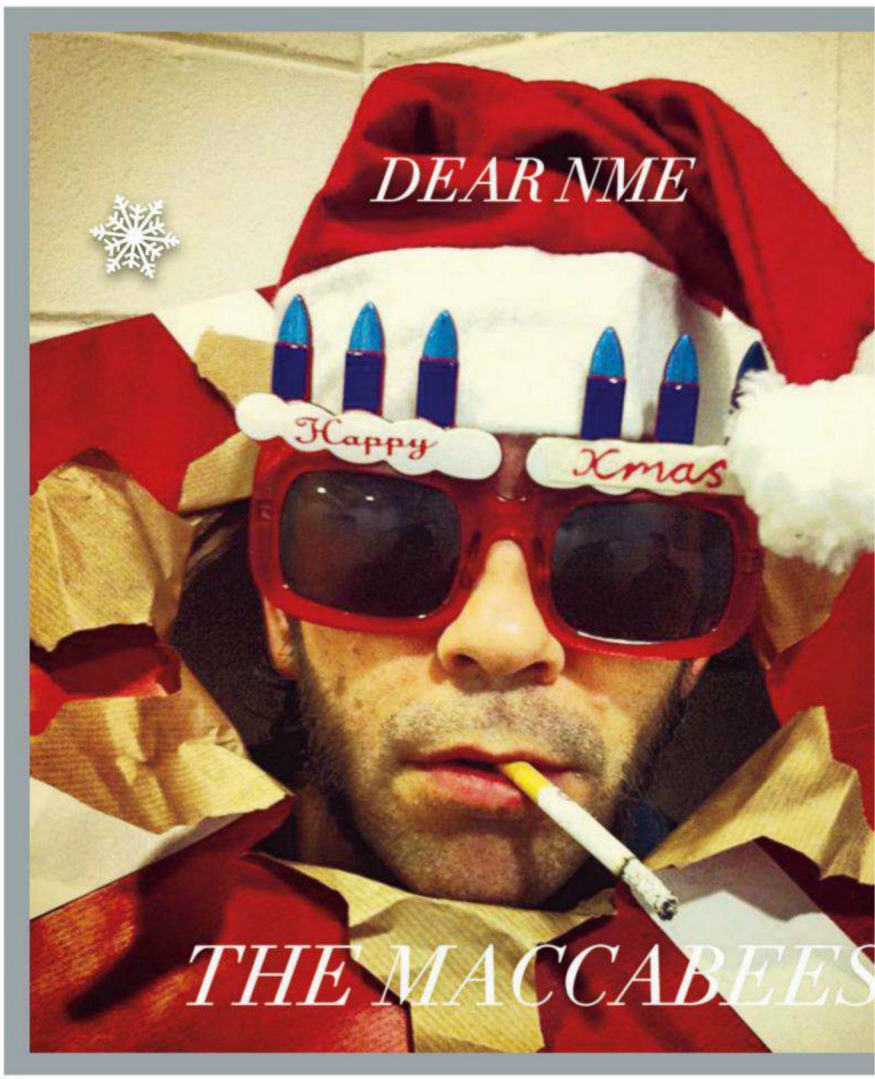


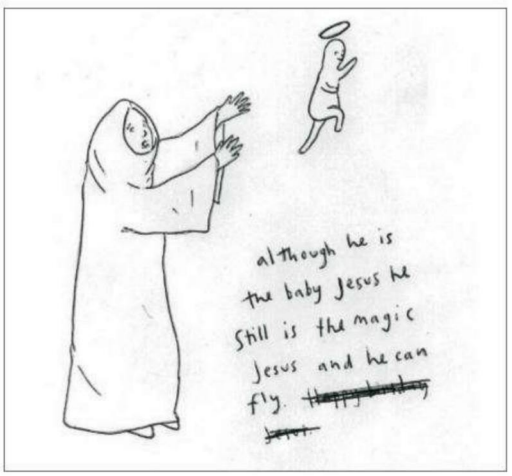


▲TOM HUDSON

Pulled Apart By Horses

"There's nothing better than spending your Christmas jazzing the place up with signed pictures of Pulled Apart By Horses and decorating your tree with offensive words written in tinsel. If that still isn't doing it for you then finish the whole thing off with a beautiful Christmas pentagram and pray you weren't naughty this year!"





◀GABRIEL BRUCE

"As it's Christmas, and Christmas is a Christian celebration, the card depicts a mischievous infant Christ eluding the virgin mother using his flying-Jesus powers. You can see that the words 'Happy Birtday Jesus' have been crossed out due to a spelling error. The card is a Christmas card to the infant Jesus Christ on the day of his birth. Happy birthday Jesus."

ANDY FALLON, DAN DENNISON, TOM MARTIN, RICHARD JOHNSON, PATRICIA BOARD, AMY BRAMHALL, DEAN CHALKLEY

Last year we persuaded music's finest to get their creative juices flowing by designing a Christmas card. It was so good, we've done it again. Check out this lot...

ORLANDO WEEKS

The Maccabees

"Happy Christmas on behalf of all The Maccabees. This picture is of our roadie Tom, the current voice of Carling Black Label South Africa. You may also recognise him from when he mimed drums on Italian *Top Of The Pops*. All the best from all of us on The Black Keys tour. Ding dong merrily on high."

"THIS IS OUR ROADIE TOM. YOU MAY RECOGNISE HIM"

ORLANDO WEEKS

PINK EYES

Fucked Up

"I'm constantly asked about the antithetical relationship of Christmas and punk. With all the kitsch and overindulgence that embodies the modern Christmas, it is a ripe playground for punk satire, both real and fake. The punk novelty record is a prime example of the fake punk side of this satire. Here I made a cover for one as my Christmas card."

ROU REYNOLDS

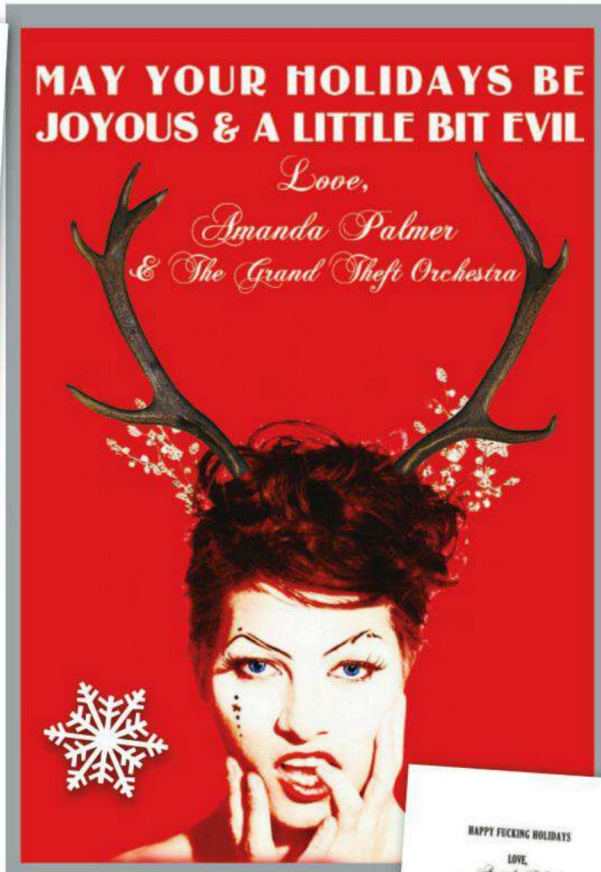
Enter Shikari

"We were asked to do this while on tour in the USA – long drives, no sleep, lots of fried food. The best was done with what limited resources were available at such distance. Please do not judge us too harshly. Enjoy your winter holiday season."

RICH FULCHER

The Mighty Boosh

"Rich Fulcher poses as the age-old Christmas Tree Whore, who would often stand by a tree in the local village and wait for the neighbourhood perverts to pick him up and put him on their tree. It's so sad that these relics are no longer appreciated and have often been replaced by plastic dolls and sexbots. But thanks to Rich, we can once again remember the immense pleasure that they brought to small towns everywhere."



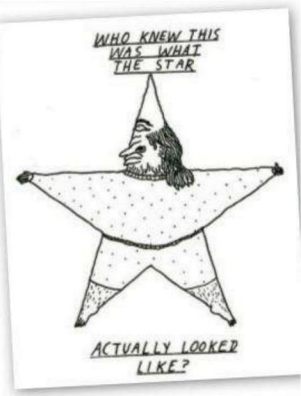
AMANDA PALMER

"When asked to do a Christmas card for *NME*, I racked my creative juices, but after thinking about it I realised that all everybody wants is to have a jolly fucking time at Christmas, and an Amanda with antlers seemed like the most appropriate thing to make. Drink, sing, feast and be merry these holidays, and stick some antlers on your head if you feel the urge. Add glitter according to taste."

ALEX PIERCE

Egyptian Hip Hop

"When *NME* asked us to draw a Christmas card for them, we were given no specific theme or any type of guidance. This left the whole thing up to my own imagination. My imagination can be a pretty stupid place to explore, and that exploration somehow ended up with this fat star-man wearing weird pyjamas, who I thought was ridiculous enough to submit."



GIVE 'EM TO YOUR FRIENDS!

Fancy dishing out the cards you've seen on these pages to your mates and family? Well now it's easy to spread the festive cheer. Head to *NME.COM* where you can download them for free, then print them out and send them out into the world. You're welcome – it's all part of the service.

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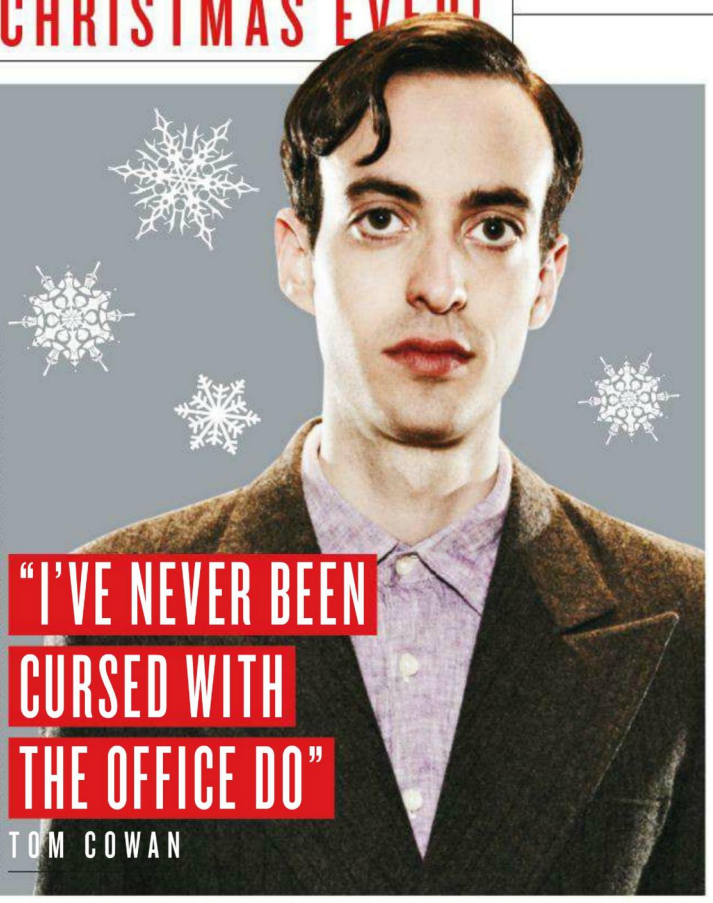
Tom Cowan
THE HORRORS



Tom, what's the best Christmas present you've ever received?
"My parents gave me some Playboy slippers one year. They should become part of my everyday wear."
And what's the best Christmas gift you've ever given?
"I gave my baby sister a tiny pink piano a couple of years ago. Which was fantastic, I think. Probably the best Christmas present anyone has ever been given. She hasn't written any songs yet, but I'm hopeful. It's tough for a toddler."
What's the best festive party you've attended?
"We usually have pretty good New Year Eve's parties. Last year I was in such a state that I closed my eyes and then opened them up again in the Buffalo Bar, which is where we have the party every year and where we've had it for the past five or six years – I opened them up and I no longer recognised it or anyone there. I was very scared for that 40 seconds. That was pretty good."
And the worst?
"I tend to chop out the bad parts of my life. I've never been cursed with the 'office do' because I kind of came out of school and went to university for about six months and then started a band and then that was it. So I haven't ever been unfortunate enough to have to do the office Christmas party. Which I assume is generally people's worst party."

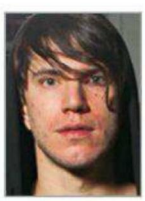
The Elton John junior piano range is in all good shops now

"I'VE NEVER BEEN CURSED WITH THE OFFICE DO"
TOM COWAN

Jonathan Higgs
EVERYTHING EVERYTHING

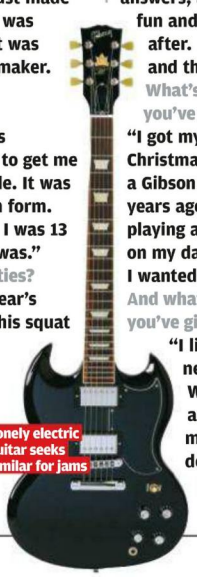
What's the best festive party you've ever been to, Jonathan?
"Well, the millennium one, of course. Mine was in a bar and most of my friends had passed out before we even got to midnight so they missed the millennium. My brother was DJing and when it got to midnight he put on the theme from *2001: A Space Odyssey*, which was obviously wrong – that music is pretty amazing and I remember no-one knowing whether it was actually midnight. We were definitely afraid of the millennium bug, which was why we were taking refuge there."
And what's the best Christmas present you've given anyone?
"Probably homemade wine – that always goes down well. The trick is to put a banana in there. If you're making a country wine, then put a banana in there and it gives it a bit of extra texture. Whole banana, loads of fruits... that's the way."

Jonathan always keeps his favourite records close to his chest

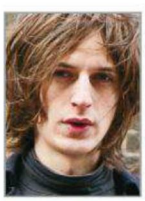


Roman Rappak
BRETON

What was the best Christmas present you ever got?
"My mum bought me this circuit thing that was like, '31 Things You Can Do With Some Electronic Stuff'. All of them just made horrible noises, that was it. It was meant to be educational but it was just used as a horrible drone-maker. I think my mum burnt it."
Cripes. And the worst?
"My mate's dad thought it was hilarious when I was about 12 to get me this Polish softcore porn puzzle. It was just softcore nudity in cartoon form. My sister got me a bong when I was 13 as well; I didn't know what it was."
Ever been to any cracking parties?
"The best was probably last year's New Year's Eve – we went to this squat party. But there was one NYE where we planned it really badly and ended up having to do the countdown on the bus. It's important where you are for that particular minute, and we ended up on the 484 to New Cross."



Lonely electric guitar seeks similar for jams



Tom Dougall
TOY

What's the best festive party you've been to, Tom?
"I've had really good times at New Year at the Cave Club (at London's Buffalo Bar – see Tom Cowan's answers, above) which is usually good fun and there's always lots of parties after. Rhys, Joe and other Horrors DJ and they always play good stuff."
What's the best Christmas present you've ever been given?
"I got my first electric guitar for Christmas when I was 13. It was a Gibson SG, but I had to sell it a few years ago to pay my rent. I'd been playing acoustic and used to play on my dad's electric – I always knew I wanted my own one."
And what's the best Christmas present you've given?
"I like getting people gifts but not necessarily for special occasions. When I was younger I didn't have any money so I used to make mixtapes for people. People don't really use tapes any more so it's quite difficult. Spotify isn't the same, is it?"

DEAN CHALKLEY, AMY BRAMMALL, DAN DENNISON, DAN KENDALL, ALAMY

MISTLETOE & WHINE

Terrible jumpers. Mince pie-induced comas. Sloshed, senile relatives. What's not to like about Christmas? Absolutely everything, according to **Jack Whitehall**, who talks turkey with **Tom Howard**

He's had a big year, has 24-year-old Jack Whitehall. Not only has *Fresh Meat* – the TV series in which he stars as the character JP – become the Channel 4 programme of choice for every mashed-up student in the land, but also his debut DVD, *Live*, has just come out, providing an exciting Christmas present option for anyone in your family who likes laughing at posh people. So you'd think he'd be excited, right? About the festive season? About goodwill to all men and all that? Actually, nope. Because Jack Whitehall hates Christmas. Here's why...

MY DAD'S FRIEND'S STINKY CHEESE

Jack: "My dad has a friend called Neil Stacy who always comes round with cheese. It's his thing. He buys cheese from a cheese shop in Bath and brings it over and it always smells. We have to put up with Neil's smelly cheese. He brings a whole truckle, a large wheel of cheese. It's usually Vacherin. Neil has to eat it outside. It stinks out the whole place and lays very heavily on his breath. Neil eats it by himself, in the garden. We don't eat it."

MY DAD'S FRIEND NEIL ALWAYS GIVES RUBBISH PRESENTS

"Neil has given me the same present for two years: Gordon Ramsay's cookbook. I don't even like cooking. The second time I was like, 'Aaah, thanks Neil', then turned to my mum and whispered, 'I think he might have Alzheimer's'. He's just a bit mad. He was in *Duty Free*, which was a sitcom in the '70s. I gave him the *Duty Free* box-set for Christmas one year."

SPROUTS ARE RUBBISH, EVEN WHEN THEY'RE FANCY

"You can't polish a turd. Brussels sprouts with bacon and all the nice bits – it's a Heston recipe – it doesn't work. They're still shit. At the end of the day they're Brussels sprouts. I'd rather have spinach or something."

WE HAVE TO STAND UP TO SALUTE THE QUEEN

"We have to stand for her speech because my dad's really into her. It's fucking bullshit. She doesn't need that. She doesn't want us to stand up. She's obsessed with standing up. During the royal pageant she stood up for the whole thing, and that was for her anniversary. The following day Prince Philip got a urinary infection. All signs point to anal sex. If you fuck the Queen in the arse you definitely get a urinary infection."

OLD PEOPLE AREN'T AS FUNNY AS THEY ARE ON DOWNTON ABBEY

"I've been very excited recently about my grandmother's existence because I watch a lot of *Downton Abbey* and Maggie Smith is very funny. Every scene basically ends with her doing a fucking witty put-down, so I got very excited and thought maybe my granny has got more banter than I've given her credit for. Let's get her down for Christmas to fire off a few little joke bombs. But unfortunately my granny is just a bit racist."

THE WAITROSE ADVERTS PRETEND TO BE CHEAP

"Heston Blumenthal and Delia Smith just stand there like, 'We're not spending any money on it and we're just standing here in a studio'. But the reason those adverts cost a lot of money is not because of the studio hire, it's because you have to pay Heston and Delia. The whole concept of that advert doesn't work unless they're donating their fee to charity, though I suspect Heston is using it to fund the building of a massive pack of fucking Hula Hoops, which is completely pointless [Heston and Delia have actually waived their appearance fees – Charity Ed]. All of Heston's programmes are pointless."

> "WE HAVE TO STAND UP FOR THE QUEEN. IT'S BULLSHIT"
>
> JACK WHITEHALL

CHRISTMAS JUMPERS MAKE ME ITCH

"I have a wool allergy so I don't wear those. My skin gets really itchy and I get, like, late-onset eczema. I have to wear cotton, like these pictures of Mark Wright in his 2013 calendar (*picks up pictures left in his publicist's office*)."

FRESH MEAT GIFT IDEAS

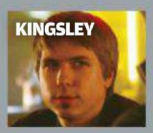
Jack on what JP will buy the others

"Drugs. She's scary and she likes drugs."

"Maybe a Taser. He's very into personal safety. Do you have to have a licence?"

"Some cock. I'd get her Mark Wright. You seen the pic of his penis on the internet? Big chap."

"She likes to hide the fact she's posh, so maybe some dubstep. That's what we did at uni."



"How many times can someone give Mark Wright? He'd like Mark Wright."

CHRISTMAS ISN'T VERY INCLUSIVE

"Because I like everyone, and the Jews and the Muslims don't have as much fun at Christmas. I wish everyone could have fun. The homeless get it fucking good at Christmas though. Shelter look after them."

YOUTHS ATTACK YOU WITH SNOW

"I got attacked by some youths with snowballs last year. They targeted me on Putney Common. It was a volley of snowballs at 10am. They're bastards. But there's quite a lot of people in my region who are the target of youth snowballing. We've got some pretty big names around there: Peter Bowles from *To The Manor Born*, the man who played Catweazle and David Dimbleby."

MY DAD AT MIDNIGHT MASS

"We have a woman vicar, and my dad's not very keen on that. So we sit through Midnight Mass and listen to my dad telling us why she shouldn't be a woman vicar. Last year he was going on about how she was clearly just wearing lingerie under her robes, which she definitely wasn't. But he was like, 'How do you know she's not wearing some tarty bra?' And I was like, 'Well, because she's a priest'."

PORT

"Port is shit. Fuck port. Jesus Christ. It's fortified wine isn't it? It's no better than Buck's Fizz but they make it out to sound like it's a really nice liqueur. It's not. It's bullshit."

CHRISTMAS DINNER INSTEAD OF CHRISTMAS LUNCH

"I hate dinner. If I eat too late I go to bed with crippling indigestion and heartburn. I have to double-drop Rennies, because that's the type of fast lifestyle I live. Sometimes I wash it down with Gaviscon."

THE NEVERENDING BULLSHIT THAT IS TURKEY

"Turkey is shit. I prefer chicken and all of the other meats because they are very moist and joyous. Also I once got raped by a turkey. I went to a turkey farm with my parents and they left me alone for a couple of minutes, and when they did the turkey flew over the pen and it raped me. It sucked my cock so hard its beak turned my penis into a turkey twizzler. My penis is now like a spring. I was eight. I'm used to it being a spring now. But at the time it was really traumatic and I had to write a letter to Bernard Matthews and tell him what one of his turkeys had done to me. Bernard Matthews told me that he'd been raped by a turkey and he really enjoyed it and that was why he was now a turkey farmer."

MAIN PHOTO: ED MILES THANKS TO WWW.THECHRISTMASJUMPERCOMPANY.CO.UK

It was the worst spliff ever

THE STORIES BEHIND THE SONGS

You hear them every year in every shop and every party, but what do these ubiquitous Christmas tracks actually mean? **Barry Nicolson** asks the people who wrote them – and they should know

Wings wanted better haircuts for Christmas

"IT'S REALLY A DRINKING SONG!"

PAUL McCARTNEY
WONDERFUL CHRISTMASTIME

Chunky knitwear, mullets and synthesizers: could Macca's 1979 hit be any more Christmassy?

PAUL McCARTNEY: "That song was one of my little home efforts, just me on my own, as I was doing around that time, with all kinds of synths and things on it. It was good fun to make. The video was great, too: we went out to some pub somewhere, and so that was a laugh... we just ran out of the pub occasionally, filmed a bit, and then went back in the pub. So that was quite a nice evening!

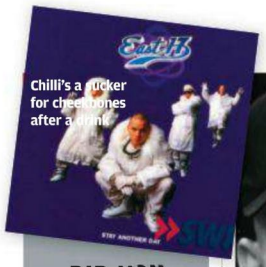
"For a while it sort of got on my nerves, that song – something like that will, because it gets played a lot. I go on and off a few of my songs, and I think 'It's not really that good', but then what will happen is other people will like it, and I then re-evaluate through other people's eyes. I go, 'You know what? He or she is not thick, so what are they seeing in it?' And then eventually I'll go, 'Oh yeah, that's what I wanted it to be'. It's just a Christmas party song, after all. Don't get too heavy on it, you know? It really is just a drinking song. If we're playing somewhere around Christmas, we always wheel that one out. And when I go back to it now, I think, yeah, this is pretty cool."

DID YOU KNOW?

- Macca wrote and played every note himself. His band Wings only appeared in the video
- This song earns McCartney around £250,000 a year in royalties
- It was written on a new synthesizer McCartney had just bought: a Sequential Circuits Prophet-5
- It's been covered by the cast of *The West Wing*

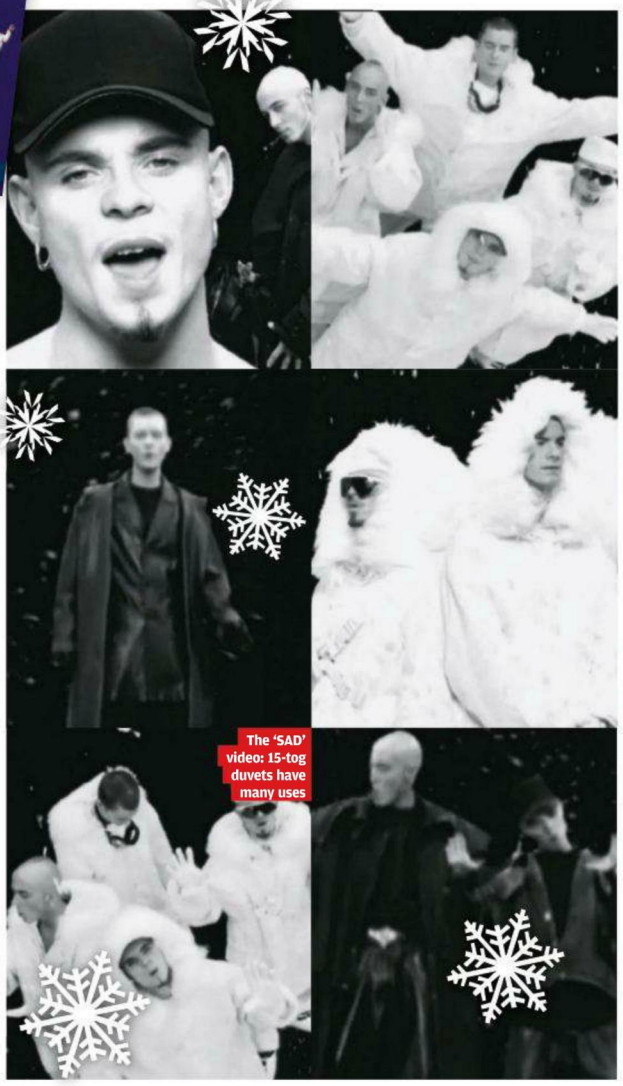
> "FOR A WHILE IT SORT OF GOT ON MY NERVES, THAT SONG"
>
> PAUL McCARTNEY

PHOTOS: REX, GETTY, RETNA



DID YOU KNOW?

- 'Stay Another Day' was Number One in Denmark, Ireland and Sweden as well as the UK
- Tony Mortimer won an Ivor Novello songwriting award for the song
- Aside from flourishes of timpani at the beginning and end, the track has no drums on it
- Despite selling just under a million copies in the UK so far, Mortimer doesn't think it's his best song. "But it is my biggest hit, so it's a weird one. My favourite song is 'Deep'," he says



The 'SAD' video: 15-tog duvets have many uses

"WE GOT THROWN OUT OF THE PRECINCT"

THE POGUES

FAIRYTALE OF NEW YORK

Is this 1987 classic the greatest Christmas song of all time? Quite possibly

SPIDER STACY, GUITARIST: "Shane [MacGowan] started writing the song two years before it was released. It had some roots in The Pogues' first trip to New York in the mid '80s. The city is exactly as you imagine it to be from all the movies you've seen, but it's also so much more than that. That was probably rattling around in Shane's head.

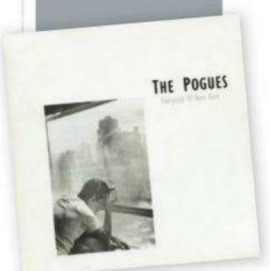
"Kirsty MacColl came to sing on it by accident – originally Shane and Cait [O'Riordan, former Pogues bassist] were going to do it, but then Cait left. Steve Lilywhite [producer] took it home to Kirsty and asked her to sing on it, to get an idea of what the female part would sound like. When we heard it back, that was our eureka moment. The song sounded so right.

"There was a bit of trouble when we were filming the video in New York – we ended up getting thrown out of the precinct house we were shooting in. We were being too loud and too drunk and not taking our presence behind the NYPD's hallowed walls seriously enough for their liking, and the police threw us out.

"The song just missed out on being Christmas Number One to Pet Shop Boys' cover of 'Always On My Mind'. None of us believed that it would get to Number One, but we were all gutted when it didn't. I bumped into Neil Tennant recently and I mentioned that song to him and he went, 'God, are you *still* banging on about that?'"

DID YOU KNOW?

- Shane MacGowan was born on Christmas Day
- The video features Hollywood star and Pogues fan Matt Dillon as an irate NYPD officer
- In 2007, the BBC began playing an edited version of the song that omitted the word *"faggot"*. After much uproar, they went back to playing the original
- The title came from a 1961 JP Donleavy novel
- The song has charted in the UK Top 20 every single year since 2005



Kirsty and Shane have proof that Father Christmas IS real (if you've had a few)

"WHEN PEOPLE LEAVE, YOU WISH YOU HAD ONE MORE DAY"

EAST 17

STAY ANOTHER DAY

The least Christmassy Christmas song ever, released in 1994 by Walthamstow's finest, is also one of the best

TONY MORTIMER: "Sometimes when I'm working on a song I'll just let it play on repeat, and 'Stay Another Day' was one of those – I went and made some spaghetti on toast once and I realised that I'd had it playing for half an hour and it hadn't pissed me off yet, so it must be good. It wasn't meant to be a Christmas single; the A&R department said we should stick some bells on the end, but that's as much as it touches on the old ho-ho-ho stuff. I thought they was all mad.

"The song is about my brother Ollie, who committed suicide when I was younger. I'd grown up with the other guys in the band, so they knew it was about him, though it wasn't something I told anyone about until people started asking about it in interviews. People know about my brother now, but what they don't know is that it's also about a good friend of mine who lost her father, and as he was dying in his hospital bed, he woke up and came back for another 24 hours. When people are leaving, you always wish that you had one more day with them, and that's where the title came from.

"Every year I say I'm never gonna perform it again, and eventually there will come a point where I'll stop doing it. As I've got older, I've lightened up about it, although I did find it weird when Girls Aloud covered a song about my brother's suicide.

"I recently had a look for the furry white parka from the video, but I don't know where it went. We looked like a bunch of fucking Eskimos, but it was one of those moments in time, wasn't it? I do wonder where it's gone. It's gotta be in my garage somewhere."

Merry Christmas

Someone wasn't happy standing so close to Sting – maybe he could write a song about it

"STATUS QUO BROUGHT A BIG BAG OF COCAINE"

BAND AID

DO THEY KNOW IT'S CHRISTMAS?

Featuring everyone from Phil Collins to Sting to Bono, this 1984 effort remains one of the few genuinely great charity records

MIDGE URE: "Bob [Geldof] and I wrote it separately. After the initial discussion, I went home and wrote the melody, and Bob turned up later with this half-baked song The Boomtown Rats had turned down years before that he'd probably reworked in the taxi on the way over. I then spent four days working on the track, trying to turn it into a palatable song while Bob was on the phone. On the day of the recording, we were stood outside an empty studio, hoping all these people would turn up.

"We had 24 hours to record and mix it, and it was a bit of a bunfight. Trevor Horn showed up – it was his studio we were recording in – and had this idea of doing a madrigal, all these vocals cascading over one another. He spent an hour of our very valuable time trying this and eventually I had to say, 'Look Trevor, thanks but no thanks.' There was a bit of a party going on too – apparently Status Quo brought a big bag of cocaine, but I was behind the desk for the entire day, so I never saw any of that first-hand. It was only afterwards that I heard Duran Duran and the Quo were the ringleaders – I was stuck in the control room all day doing the job!

"It was all very good-natured though; people generally got on with each other. The only person I lost my temper at was Bob. He's not the world's best singer, and it's intimidating for any artist to stand in a studio with a camera in their face, singing a song they've never heard while their contemporaries look on through the control-room window. The last thing anyone needed was Bob singing the wrong melody at them. Eventually I snapped and went, 'For Christ's sake, I know how the melody goes, let *me* tell them!'"

DID YOU KNOW?

- Boy George almost missed the recording – he was in New York and flew in on Concorde after a hectoring call from Bob Geldof
- Until Elton John's 'Candle In The Wind 1997', this was the biggest-selling single in British history, shifting 3.7 million copies
- The song was recorded in one frantic 24-hour burst, starting on November 25, 1984. It hit the shelves two days later
- It's been re-recorded twice – by Band Aid II in 1989, and Band Aid 20 in 2004

"OUR PRODUCT IS PEACE"

JOHN LENNON AND YOKO ONO

HAPPY XMAS (WAR IS OVER)

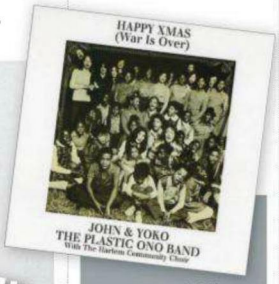
World peace was the goal in 1971. Radio play at Christmas is the result 40 years later

"In today's society," John Lennon said in 1969, "advertising is the thing that politicians use and companies use. The Beatles use it, and John and Yoko should use it. Our product is peace." Midge Ure and Bob Geldof may have perfected the art of the Christmas single as political statement, but 'Happy Xmas (War Is Over)' is where, knowingly or not, they got the idea. The only thing lacking was timing: the song arrived two years *after* John and Yoko had plastered 12 cities around the world with posters declaring 'WAR IS OVER' and its eventual recording in late 1971 meant its release came too late to make much of a dent in the charts.

"I was sick of 'White Christmas'," Lennon quipped when asked about the song's genesis, and though it's since become a festive staple, back then, there had never been a Christmas song quite like it. The song, whose chords and melody borrow heavily from the US folk standard 'Stewball', was written in collaboration with Yoko and recorded with Phil Spector, a man who knows a thing or two about Christmas records. And yet it's not *really* about Christmas at all. Lennon's main fixation was the ongoing war in Vietnam and the idea "that we're just as responsible as the man who pushes the button. As long as people imagine that somebody's doing it to them, and that they have no control, then they have no control."

Though it disappointed commercially (and politically; the war continued for another four years), the song is now a seasonal standard, almost as ubiquitous as 'White Christmas' itself. The message behind it, however, is evergreen: "We wanted to get at least one plug in for peace on Earth at Christmas," Lennon explained. "That implies no violence, no starving children, no violent minds, no violent households, no frustration and no fear."

'Golf Sale This Way' wouldn't have had quite the same impact



DID YOU KNOW?

- The single's UK release in 1971 was delayed over a legal dispute, but it was eventually released in November 1972, peaking at Number Four
- Despite its similarity to the song 'Stewball', Lennon claimed he'd based it on the Paris Sisters' Phil Spector-produced 1961 hit 'I Love How You Love Me'
- The cities targeted by John and Yoko's poster campaign were New York, LA, Toronto, Rome, Athens, London, Amsterdam, Berlin, Paris, Tokyo, Hong Kong and Helsinki
- Phil Spector used the Harlem Community Choir to sing the climactic "*War is over/If you want it*" coda
- The song was written in a New York hotel room shortly after John and Yoko had moved to the city

> "WE WANTED TO GET A PLUG IN FOR PEACE AT CHRISTMAS"
>
> JOHN LENNON

The Xmas song world cup!

Get involved in our big festive vote! We're holding the Christmas Song World Cup on *NME.COM* now, whittling down 50 entrants to one eventual winner. The heat winners will be decided by *NME.COM* users – head to the site now to have your say, and check out videos from the likes of Palma Violets and Jack Whitehall talking about their favourite festive songs.

CHAMPAGNE SPECTOR-NOVA!

It's been a year to celebrate: who knew London scenesters **Spector** would end 2012 as bona fide chart stars and festival heroes? **Ben Hewitt** pops his cork

"Let's put it this way," booms Fred Macpherson triumphantly. "I heard that Geri Halliwell wrote on a picture of her dead father – and this ties in with a lot of Noel Edmonds' theories about cosmic ordering, too – the five things she wanted to achieve: have a Number One single, meet George Michael, blah blah. All those things happened in a year.

"On the back of a scrap piece of paper, which I think was the packaging of a *Star Wars* toy I found in my old bedroom at my mum's house, I wrote down five things I wanted to achieve," he continues. "And without saying what they were, we as a band achieved four of those things."

Fuck the naysayers! Cast out the cynics! String up the grinches! After hurtling into 2012 pegged as everything from buzz band to calculated jokers, Spector are ending the year as A Big Deal. And Fred is the jester-turned-indie-king, holding court in the band's French dressing room and showing us the official Spector calendar (best picture: Fred staring balefully down the lens, rubbing a kitten against his face). "I'm glad you're here to celebrate with us in what feels like a cold psychiatric unit," says Fred of the soulless Zenith De Paris arena they're holed up in, supporting Florence + The Machine. "Hopefully there might be free soup."

Spector have racked up an impressive record of achievement over the past 12 months. There was the early performance on *Later... With Jools Holland*; slaying the crowds at Reading And Leeds Festivals and the Isle Of Wight. And throw in a bizarre foray to the Far East, too, where they were handpicked to launch Topman in Kuala Lumpur (Fred: "I don't know if we had Goebbels doing our press... we had to take some competition winners shopping, and I got a 40-year-old engineer who decided he wasn't interested in silk floral shirts and wanted some work trousers instead").

But, beyond all the big talk, 2012's been massive for Spector because of the music: the album 'Enjoy It While It Lasts' may have been gift-wrapped with an insurance policy of a title, but tracks such as 'Friday Night, Don't Ever Let It End' and 'Chevy Thunder' have become bona-fide indie disco staples, and the album debuted at Number 12 in the UK charts. "I'm so proud of making that album," says Fred, suddenly serious. "And in doing so, we weren't just fulfilling our aims now – it was fulfilling all the teenage dreams we had."

> "I'D NEVER SLEEP WITH SOMEONE WHO PAID TO SEE A SPECTOR GIG"
>
> FRED MACPHERSON

"If I had an airhorn and was listening to it, there's at least five or six moments where I'd be smashing it. Just massive moments," he continues. "I can see why they're irrelevant to some people – certain tracks seem like things from another time – but it's psychology: like the Stereophonics once said, you've gotta go there to come back. And you can't put it better than Kelly Jones, a true wordsmith."

If there's a rub to all this, of course, it's what becomes of Spector now they've smashed through to the other side. As Fred says: "I grew up

Isle Of Wight, you just got Spector-ed

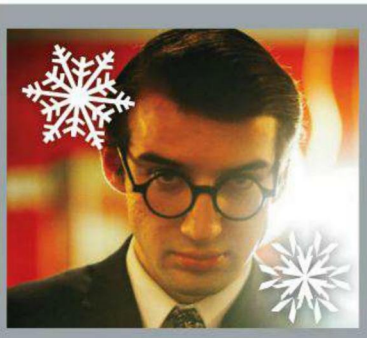
in the London indie scene. For us, getting a gig at The Rhythm Factory supporting someone who once met one of Babyshambles was as good as it got." Now he's something of an indie celeb himself – spouting witticisms on *Never Mind The Buzzcocks* and inspiring at least one person to tattoo himself with pictures of Fred's face. So the question is, what comes next?

"The best moments of the year haven't been people coming up to me in HMV when I'm trying to buy *Cool Runnings* on DVD, saying 'Were you in that band on TV?'" he insists.

And there's no lustful groupies, either. "I would never sleep with someone who paid to see a Spector gig," deadpans Fred. "The fame or any of the trappings don't add anything to the creative process. When you're in your bed – however many supermodels are in it – the thing you think about before you go to sleep is whether you're doing what you want to do. And the second we're not, we'll dust off the old CV. I haven't opened my CV since I had Windows 95, but at least I'll be able to put a couple more things on it now, if and when I need to get a job. No doubt I will..."

Somehow, though, it's unlikely Fred and his bandmates will need to pop down to the Job Centre just yet – they're too busy taking over the world, one indie hit, fan tattoo and kitten calendar at a time.

Pricey champagne is small beer for the newly minted Spector



"I NEED TO FIND A WIFE..."

Fred Macpherson's New Year's resolutions

1 BE A NICER PERSON

"When I spoke to *NME* last year, I said my New Year's Resolution was to be more obnoxious, because obnoxious people do better in life. We've done well and I've been obnoxious, so this year I want to try and do some good deeds. I want to be nicer to people and the ones who care about me the most. I played the wanker card a lot, and now it's dog-eared. But I've got a deck of 52 cards and I'll be playing the Mr Nice Guy one."

2 CATCH UP ON SOAPS AND GET MARRIED

"I need to find a wife and catch up on *EastEnders*. I'm 35 episodes back, but due to BT Vision – it's a Sky-like digital thing that records every episode of your favourite programme – I have them saved. Each one is half an hour long, and I have 17 and a half hours to watch. Where I'm at, Ian Beale is only just back from being a tramp, which shows how far I am behind. And I want to find love in a hopeless place. If anyone wants to come round to my house, I can guarantee I can provide the hopeless place, if not quite the love."

3 MAKE BETTER MUSIC

"We're going to make better music. That's our promise. We've made some pretty good tunes. Sure, 'Chevy Thunder' is a banger. Maybe it gets the kids going wild at your northern indie disco. But let's be honest: we've only written some quite good songs. And I believe in this band we have at least one, if not two, of the nation's premier songwriters. Spector *will* make better music in 2013. I don't know when we'll get to release it – sooner rather than later, hopefully. But we'll make a great record."

4 BE MORE HONEST

"The other resolution is to work out what Spector actually is. People say you have your whole life to make your first album and only however long to make your second one, but I'm actually excited by that, because taste-wise we've cleaned out all of the... what's that spiky insulation stuff called? Asbestos. We've cleaned all the asbestos out of the loft, and we're ready to have a spring clean. Maybe make room for the baby – that's a metaphor. So I think we'll be more honest. And more real. And continue to enjoy it."

TOM MARTIN (MAIN PHOTO), EMILIE BAILEY

MERRY QUIFFMAS EVERYONE

With sellout tours, an Arctic Monkeys hook-up and his biggest album yet, **Richard Hawley** has just nailed 2012. **Lisa Wright** joins him by the fireside to toast his year with a thousand pints of Guinness

Despite clocking up more than two decades in the music business, Sheffield don Richard Hawley has had his best year yet. From January's collaboration with pals Arctic Monkeys as The Death Ramps on 'You And I', to his adored, Mercury-nominated album 'Standing At The Sky's Edge' and its brave new psych-buzz direction, to a slew of sell-out tours, Hawley upped his game from smartly tailored, string-laden crooner to something more important. So, to toast the singer's mad 2012, we settled him next to the roaring fire of his local boozer The Scotsman's Pack, opened up the mince pies, lined up countless pints of Guinness and got him to ruminate on his recent past. "The Brits are offensive, they're just full of coked-up, fat old white men," he lilts, taking a slug on his pint. We might be here a while...

***NME*: It's been a pretty manic year. Did you expect 'Standing At The Sky's Edge' to go down so well?**

Hawley: "You have to be brave and push yourself. With this record I knew I was going to be challenging people. I've always had quite low expectations, which is healthy in a lot of ways, but pretty much everywhere we've played this year has sold out and, considering that we're living in pretty tough times, that's amazing. People are really nailing their colours to my mast... excuse the euphemism."

You got nominated for the Mercury Prize again – are you sad you didn't win?

"I didn't give a fuck. Some people have told me that it's good that I've been nominated twice, but I'm genuinely not arsed. My wife got absolutely rat-arsed there, she picked up the little award you get [for being nominated] and it just fell apart in her hands. I've now got a carrier bag under the bed stuffed with bits of Mercury award. I try to avoid the whole celebrity thing; you don't want to become bigger than your own music. It's not necessary for me to appear on *Strictly Come Fuckwit*; that's got nothing to do with why I've got a guitar in my hands and why I'm singing my heart out."

Any memorable touring adventures?

"Well, on the second day of the first tour I broke my leg. I slipped on a marble staircase in Barcelona after visiting my friend's newborn son; I was being such a good boy as well. I did the whole 15-date tour in a wheelchair completely and utterly out of my brains on tramadol and red wine – it was like a little sojourn back into the old days. I remember Guy Garvey pushing me onstage at Latitude wearing one of them hi-vis jackets. The minute my wife found out I was enjoying temazepam she threw them all down the toilet."

Any plans to take that Arctic Monkeys collaboration further?

"Yeah, I enjoyed that. We've talked about [doing an album]. It'll happen when the time is right. There's loads of things going off at the moment... I've been working with Edwyn Collins, which I'm really excited about; I've adored Edwyn since I was a very young man so that was a great, great honour. To be one of those people that he chose was like that thing out of *Toy Story*, one of those aliens with three eyes being plucked out."

> "I FELL THROUGH A PLATE-GLASS WINDOW ONE CHRISTMAS EVE..."
>
> RICHARD HAWLEY

Now you've got time to relax, what are you going to be up to this Christmas?

"I try and keep the whole corporate horror of it all as far away as possible. We're getting another dog this Christmas, though; he's going to be called Alfie Bone, like Alfie Boe the opera singer."

OLD SAINT DICK

What Hawley's getting his Sheffield pals for Christmas

ALEX TURNER

"I've hooked Alex up with Eastwood guitars and they're gonna give him loads of guitars. I'll buy him a pint as well – they're in LA so I don't see them often. You'll have to take me out of Sheffield in a box."

JARVIS COCKER

"I'll be buying Jarvis vinyl. If I tell you what it'll spoil it though! We like our choons. He once got me a fucking boss album by Gary Burton called 'Good Vibes'. Jarv puts a lot of thought into the gifts that he gives."

Any memorably lairy festivities from back in the Pulp days?

"I fell through a plate-glass window once on Christmas Eve. I got totally shitfaced and tried to take my trousers off. Trying to do that while being vertical after 15 pints of Guinness is difficult, and I fell back through the window of our house. So on Christmas Day we didn't have a bedroom window. Everyone in the band was in the arena of the unwell at that time. The millennium was a humdinger too. Jarvis bought this firework that looked like a fucking Zanussi fridge, with one fuse at the top where you light the motherfucker and it all goes off for you. There was shit flying at us, rockets aimed at the house, and we were all pinned to the wall like being in a war zone. Terrifying."

Presumably things have calmed down a bit since then...

"Kind of. When you get older you just want to shut the doors a bit more. A few years ago me and Chez, who plays guitar in our band, had done a world tour from January to December and we played a gig in Ireland right at the end. We were fucked. When you're on tour it's like an egg frying in a pan for too long – it looks like an egg, but you don't wanna go there. We turned up at the Benners Hotel and Pete from Elbow called me and asked if I was alright, and then by the Christmas tree was all the Elbow boys, Billy Bragg, Hugh Cornwell from The Stranglers and two pints of Guinness. I nearly wept."

That's the spirit. And any New Year's resolutions for 2013?

"Never done it. I'll not keep them. I'd like to give up smoking... well, I sort of don't want to... ah, fuck it, I love smoking and drinking. They're my last bad boy vices..."

True to form, five hours later we're still firmly in the pub. Pies have been pushed to the side, pints have been treated in the opposite manner and Hawley's recounting the kind of tales that could make for one of the most ridiculous biographies in history. For example, there's the time Joe Strummer sprinkled a gram of cocaine on his fish and chips. Why? Because he had to "use it up somehow". Of course. Let's hope next year he gets round to writing a book.

MAIN PHOTO: ANDY WILLSHER. PHOTOS: DEAN CHALKLEY, PIETER M VAN HATTEM THANKS TO PAPERCHASE

Merry Christmas

THE MEGA NME BOREDOM

Ready for some Christmas music quiz action? Then dive into our festive challenge and you could win yourself a load of Converse swag and gig tickets! So grab yourself an eggnog and a sausage roll and let it begin...

Nicki Minaj on her way to Spike Island

Round 1
20 QUESTIONS ABOUT 2012

1 Which hard partier was named a US Cultural Ambassador to the Middle East this year?

2 The first man on the moon, Neil Armstrong, died this year. But which band paid touching tribute to him at Leeds Festival by giving him a shout-out?

3 Nicki Minaj told fans on Twitter to "eat shit" and do what after cancelling her appearance at V Festival?

4 Jake Bugg had a rather big 2012 – but Bugg is actually his mum's maiden name. What's his birth surname?

5 Who supposedly handpicked Two Door Cinema Club's Alex Trimble to sing at the opening ceremony of the Olympics when the torch was entering the stadium?

6 Which former *X Factor*-type got a bottle of piss thrown at them at V Festival?

7 Which French actress and singer did Pete Doherty tell *NME* this year he had a steamy affair with?

8 Ex-Gallows screamer Frank Carter played his first gigs with Pure Love this year. But who is the 'other one' in the band?

9 Which two members of The Vaccines took to wearing fetching sleeveless denim jackets this year, like they were in the early years of Take That?

10 Who released a box-set with a song called 'Sir Elton John's Cock' on it?

11 Which Primal Scream replacement bassist was herself replaced by a relative unknown called Simone Butler in October?

12 Which daughter of a Sex Pistol supported The Stone Roses at Heaton Park in June?

13 Which oddball US singer this year declared that he had an "active masturbation life" in *NME*?

Alex stands dangerously close to the Olympic flame

Frank Carter sings a lovely carol...

Green Day can't count to four in Spanish

...and Pond's Nick Allbrook joins in

14 Which band, who were ditched by their record label this year, released their album featuring an erect cock on the cover art?

15 Continuing the theme, what did Natasha Khan have draped over her shoulders on the cover of her new album?

16 Pond and Tame Impala share a few of the same members and both released new albums in 2012 – but whose came out first?

17 This was the year Lee Newell from defunct lad-rockers Viva Brother launched a new boyband career. What's his new band called?

18 Who released a book called *Unknown Pleasures* this year?

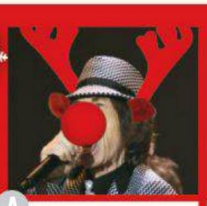
19 Green Day released three albums in 2012: '¡Uno!', '¡Dos!' and '¡Tré!'. But which of the three featured rehab-visiting singer Billie Joe Armstrong's face on it?

20 Glasvegas named their new album twice this year. What was the first name for it?

Natasha Khan salutes leopards

Gary: chasing stars

Round 2
GARY LIGHTBODY'S REINDEER CHALLENGE



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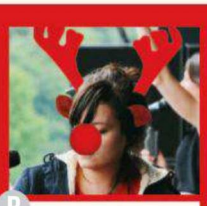

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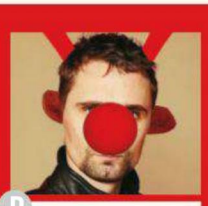


D

Snow Patrol warbler Gary Lightbody (wait, come back!) used to be in an indie group called Reindeer Section, y'know – and now he's only gone and stuck reindeer features on a load of rock stars. Can you identify the faces under the antlers?

PAMELA LITTKY, DAN DENNISON, PHIL WALLIS, ANDY WILLSHER, AMY BRAMMALL, DEAN CHALKLEY, VICTOR FRANKOWSKI

M-CRUSHING XMAS QUIZ

Round 3 FESTIVE ANAGRAMS

All these wintry artists have had their letters jumbled up – can you straighten them out?

1. A Glaze Hen
2. Lady Clop
3. Bless He Gill
4. Weary Birth
5. Nachos Geez III

Round 4 THE ALBUM COVER CHALLENGE

We've spelled out a festive message for you – but which album cover does each letter come from?

Round 5 SPOT THE DIFFERENCE

Look, it's those Arctic Monkeys, all dressed up as evil elves. Spot the five differences in the pictures and write down exactly where they are on your email when you enter the competition (right)

WIN!

Converse exclusives and money-can't-buy gig tickets up for grabs

Reckon you've nailed the quiz? Email your answers in full to *letters@NME.COM* with 'XMAS QUIZ 2012' as the subject. Include your full name, address and shoe size, and you'll be in with a shot of winning a massive Converse swag bag. Inside the bag will be one pair of Chuck Taylors, one pair of exclusive 100 Club Chuck Taylors, a Converse 100 Club T-shirt and entry to every Converse gig taking place at London's 100 Club in 2013. Bands who have played the shows before include The Vaccines, Blur, Nas, Plan B and Paul Weller – so it's a pretty special prize. Good luck!

Entries must be in by January 1. The answers will be published at *NME.COM/blogs* on January 2.

NME'S ALTERNAT

Wondering what to watch on the box this Yuletide? Let comedian Peter Serafinowicz be your guide. Warning: contains Noel Edmonds nudity and Philip Schofield's paedo list...

"THE ONLY GUEST ON JONATHAN ROSS IS PETER SERAFINOWICZ"

PETER SERAFINOWICZ

BBC1

MRS BROWN'S BOYS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Christmas Eve, 10.10pm

A special feature-length edition of the popular comedy show takes a thoughtful turn from the outset: while queuing for the bathroom, the boys' patience gets the better of them and they burst in on Mrs Brown, and are shocked to discover she has a penis. Poignant, harrowing and moving exploration of comedy gender issues. Pedro Almodóvar directs.

DOCTOR WHO CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

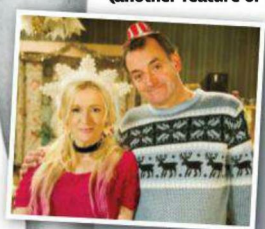
Christmas Day, 5.20pm

The Doctor returns to his old profession: treating genito-urinary infections in his TARDIS. A Dalek comes in, disguised as an obese man suffering from cystitis. The Dalek tries to exterminate the Doctor while being examined but he has it on the wrong setting and snow comes out of the plunger thing. Then they all sing carols and the Doc fits the Dalek with a vocoder so he can join in.

STRICTLY COME DANCING CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Christmas Day, 6.20pm

The bionically controlled corpse of Bruce Forsyth has had a software update for Christmas – it now has Inspector Gadget-style extending legs which he uses to pneumatically bound around the dancers while creating a mystical atmosphere by issuing dry ice from his robotic 'anus' (another feature of Bruce version 2.8.0).



THE ROYLE FAMILY CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

Christmas Day, 10pm

The gang sit round the TV and watch old episodes of *The Royle Family*. Caroline Aherne and Craig Cash take turns saying "I wrote that bit".

BBC2

DRAGONS' DEN CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

December 23, 8.30pm

The Dragons make an incredible discovery: when presenter Evan Davis' index finger glows as he points to the crayon Peter Jones uses to write his jokes, Duncan realises the truth: he is an alien. But just as Theo is about to smash Evan's head with a glass coffee table, Deborah communicates with the alien telepathically and realises he means them no harm and just wants to go home. Last in the series.

JAMES MAY'S TOY STORIES

December 23, 9.30pm

James May's Toy Stories Xmas Special. James May's Toy Stories Xmas Special. James May's Toy Stories Xmas Special. James May's Toy Stories Xmas Special. James May's Toy Stories Xmas Special. James May's Toy Stories Xmas Special. JAMES MAY'S. TOY STORIES. XMAS SPECIAL.

CELEBRITY UNIVERSITY CHALLENGE

New Year's Eve, 5.30pm

For this Yuletide edition the show becomes *I'm A Celebrity University Challenge!* The mid to highbrow questions are replaced by tasks wherein the panellists must eat the gonads, pudenda and genitals of animals kindly donated by the British Natural History Museum. Presented by Jeremy Paxman and Dec.

JOOLS' HOOTENANNY ON NYE

New Year's Eve, 11.15pm

Sadly, this show was recorded after Jools had his hands amputated due to his long battle with acute honcitoncitis. He gamely bashes away with his stumps, but it's just not the same, although it is greatly improved. On a happier note, Jools' voice has finally broken, revealing a rich, irritating baritone.

IVE TV GUIDE

ITV

THE JONATHAN ROSS CHRISTMAS SHOW
December 22, 9pm

Jonathan's only guest is the acclaimed comedian and actor Peter Serafinowicz, who talks about his book *A Billion Jokes (Volume One)*, his upcoming Brian Butterfield movie, and the sincere apology he received from the BBC for cancelling his sketch show.

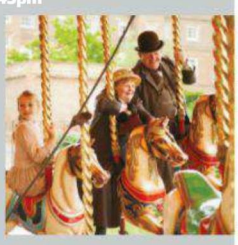
THE CUBE
December 23, 8pm

It's back with a twist: this time, the actual Cube is completely black so no-one can witness what occurs inside. Guests include the cast of Philip Schofield's paedophile list.

PAUL O'GRADY: FOR THE LOVE OF DOGS CHRISTMAS SPECIAL
Christmas Day, 6pm

Paul O'Grady visits Korea where he samples some of the local street delicacies... oh fuck it, I can't say anything remotely nasty about this man: absolutely everything he does is bursting with warmth and humanity. He's hilarious too. I love him. Undoubtedly one of Earth's finest humans.

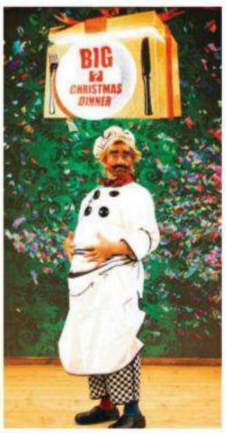
DOWNTON ABBEY
Christmas Day, 8.45pm



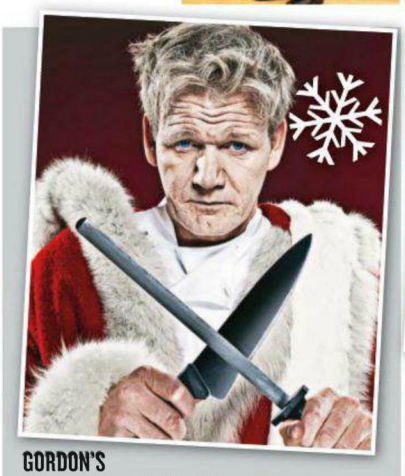
A huge coup for Julian Fellowes as the show becomes *Ricky Gervais' Down's Syndrome Abbey!* Ricky's hilarious Down's Syndrome character 'Derek' bumbles and fumbles his way through the Abbey, causing Down's Syndrome-related havoc both upstairs and 'Down's'-stairs! A must for everyone who loves to see a successful, mentally able comedian make fun of a Down's Syndrome man. Also features a dwarf in a toilet and a movie star pretending they're not very nice! Heart-chilling.

CHANNEL 4

DEAL OR NO DEAL'S BIG CHRISTMAS DINNER
Christmas Eve, 1.45pm



Noel Edmonds presents a special all-naked episode of *Deal Or No Deal*, and maintains a beautiful, dainty erection throughout. Note: make sure you catch it live, as the 4OD version will be censored because it's Noel's surprise! I really hope Channel 4 aren't reading this.



GORDON'S CHRISTMAS COOKALONG
Christmas Day, 10am

Gordon learns to speak Turkish in order to berate and swear at a turkey, which he then slaughters and roasts. Then he calls everyone cunts and we all laugh. He also shows us how to make the perfect cinnamon Danish, using his forehead as a template.

ALAN CARR'S NYE SPECTACULAR
New Year's Eve, 9pm

Alan is surprised by a guest appearance from Santa, but surprise quickly turns to shock when he pulls the beard off to reveal another beard – that of Justin Lee Collins. JLC quickly orders everyone to look directly at him (or at the floor) while combing his hair and moisturising his back. Good times!

FIVE

A RIGHT ROYAL YEAR
Christmas Eve, 6pm

A lavish programme charting one of the most memorable years for our Royal Family. All the glittering highlights from the Jubilee right up to the latest Royal embryo have been chronicled by a group of filthy commoners for us all to gape at in our hovels. Narrated by some peasant.

THE WORLD'S BIGGEST ANIMALS
Christmas Eve, 8pm

Channel 5's Christmas theme continues with that old festive standby, giant beasts. We meet the blue whale Alan Titchmarsh keeps in his swimming pool and a gargantuan maggot that has learned to paint. Merry Christmas!

EDDIE STOBART: TRUCKS, TRAILERS AND TINSEL
Christmas Day, 8pm

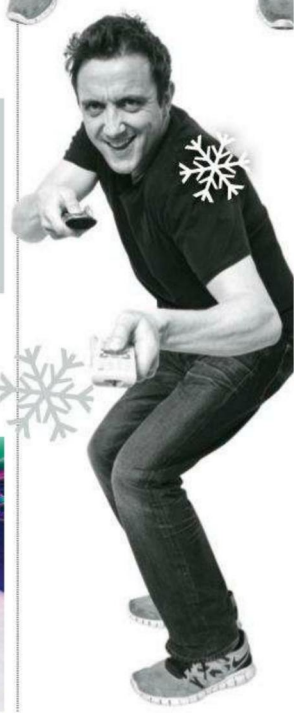
What could be more Christmassy than a show about truck drivers and the enchanting world of logistics? An enthralling, beguiling Christmas treat for all of us who enjoy that most potent of Yuletide symbols: the heavy goods vehicle.

WORLD'S STRONGEST MAN
December 27, 8pm

Forget beefcakes, this competition focuses purely on emotional strength. Contestants are faced with gruelling challenges from reliving their childhood bullying to watching their wives have multiple affairs. Features Europe's largest emotional rollercoaster.

CELEBRITY BIG BROTHER LAUNCH
January 4, 9pm

CBB is back!! This year's celebrity line-up includes (SPOILER ALERT!) a man who was on Normal *Big Brother*, a woman who was on television in the 1960s, a man who was on YouTube, a woman who had sexual intercourse with a man from Normal *Big Brother*, a man who was an unsuccessful contestant on a talent show two years ago, a woman whose picture was in a magazine, and George Galloway MP.



ANDY WILLSHER, BBC, ITV, CHANNEL 4, FIVE, MARK HARRISON, ADRIAN ROGERS, PAUL RIDER, ANDY FARRINGTON, RAY BURMISTON, ALAN PEEBLES, CHARLES FEARN, NICK WALL, MICK GELL, NEALE HAYES, NICKY JOHNSTON, KIERON MCCARRON

SINGLES ALL THE WAY

Our star-studded panel (and Keith Lemon) pump it up and look back at the year's most chat-worthy tracks

YOUR PANEL

WRETCH 32

Who: Ed Sheeran-endorsed rapping dude
Vibe: Placid
Distance travelled to be here: 12 miles (Tottenham to Battersea)

LINDSEY TROY

Who: Deap Vally guitarist/vocalist
Vibe: American
Distance travelled to be here: 5,500 miles (Los Angeles to London)

MARK E SMITH

Who: The Fall leader and singer
Vibe: Affable
Distance travelled to be here: 200 miles (Manchester to London)

WILL REES

Who: Mystery Jets guitarist
Vibe: Contemplative
Distance travelled to be here: 10 miles (Twickenham to Battersea)

KEITH LEMON

Who: Moustachioed host of *Celebrity Juice*
Vibe: Manic
Distance travelled to be here: 180 miles (Yorkshire to London)

IAN WATKINS

Who: Lostprophets vocalist
Vibe: Dashing
Distance travelled to be here: 160 miles (Pontypridd to London)

JULIE EDWARDS

Who: Deap Vally drummer
Vibe: Slightly less American than Lindsey
Distance travelled to be here: 5,500 miles (Los Angeles to London)

CALL ME MAYBE
CARLY RAE JEPSEN

Keith: "I don't know how old she is, but it sounds like an upbeat tune to masturbate to while I was thinking I was making love to her."
Wretch: "It's infectious."
Mark: "I like it. It goes a bit."
Keith: "I can imagine it at a six-year-old's party with balloon animals – 'I had a great time. Thanks, Dad'. What did you think, Ian? Can you say it all in Welsh so they have to translate it?"
Ian: "I like it."
Keith: "It's not real music. But for kids, it does the job, doesn't it?"

TEENAGE ICON
THE VACCINES

Julie: "I think now is a good time to bring up Frankie Avalon."
Ian: "Who's Frankie Avalon?"
Julie: "Frankie Avalon was a heart-throb in the '50s and '60s."
Keith: "Was he in *Grease*?"
Ian: "Frankie Valli sang 'Grease'."
Will: "I think they've written better songs."
Lindsey: "I'm just happy to hear a guitar solo in pop music. That makes me happy."
Wretch: "It's not my favourite Vaccines song but I still like it."
Mark: "Don't they all live together or something? I've heard better songs by them."
Will: "Is he saying he isn't a teenage icon because he's scruffy and messy? What's the message here?"
Julie: "I think he is a teenage icon. We just opened for them on tour and if you see the look on the girls' faces while they are playing, they think of him as a teenage icon. They like the fact that he doesn't see himself like that."
Keith: "I think this is another good song to have a wank to, but with a different feeling. I'd have a quick wank to this song before I go out and meet me mates."
Mark: "You're giving all your creativity away! (*mouths some words at Keith*)."
Keith: "What?"
Mark: "Keith, wanking makes you deaf!"

CANNONBALL
JAKE BUGG

Keith: "Jake who?"
Wretch: "I like the lyrics. But I'm kind of waiting for it to kick in."
Will: "His singing reminds me of Liam Gallagher."
Keith: "It reminds me of Buddy Holly and jukebox music, like you'd hear in the background of *Happy Days*. I like this tune."
Will: "I think it's great."
Ian: "Is he legit?"
Will: "What do you mean?"
Ian: "Does he write his own songs?"
Will: "I think it's definitely him."

CANDY
ROBBIE WILLIAMS

Keith: "I don't normally like Robbie Williams songs because they've been destroyed by karaoke. But I quite like this. The chorus sounds very football chant-y. (*Sings along*) *'Hey, ho, hairy hole...'*. That's what I like to sing."
Wretch: "It's catchy. When you hear there's going to be a new Robbie Williams song, you do expect it to sound like this."
Julie: "It's light and fluffy but it lacks the epicness of 'Millennium'."
Mark: "I think it's good, this. I'm surprised. It's got a lot of that new dance sound in it. The lyrics are quite good."
Keith: "It sounds like it could be the theme tune to a show where you get back together with your family."
Lindsey: "It's sounds like a theme tune for a cruise liner!"

> "I'D HAVE A QUICK WANK TO THIS SONG BEFORE I MEET MY MATES"
> KEITH LEMON

BEST OF FRIENDS
PALMA VIOLETS

Keith: "This is *NME*'s Single Of The Year? Above anything Peter Andre has done? Wow."
Mark: "It sounds like 'The Whole Of The Moon' by The Waterboys (*starts singing*)."
Keith: "It does!"
Julie: "I think it sounds really danceable. This is the sort of song you could dance to when you're blow-drying your hair and putting your makeup on."

Someone's chuffed about their wanking injury

Mark: "This type of singing is quite popular, isn't it?"
Wretch: "I didn't get into it."
Keith: "It scares me, this song. It makes me have bad thoughts."

GANGNAM STYLE
PSY

Ian: "Remember 'Pump Up The Jam' by Technotronic? (*sings*). This is basically it."
Ian/Keith: "(*Rapping*) *Pump up the jam/Pump it up while your feet are stomping!*"
Keith: "It is! Fucking hell. The robbing bastards! I wonder what they are up to now?"
Ian: "It's been over 20 years. No-one's going to remember 'Pump Up The Jam'."
Mark: "I don't know what it means."
Keith: "What is Gangnam?"
Julie: "If you put a *'gang'* and a *'hey'* in a song it's going to be a hit. This song reminds me of a regrettable night, like causing trouble at a wedding."
Wretch: "This song comes on all the time. I've never heard this to the end. I hate it."
Keith: "I hate this song but I like 'Pump Up The Jam'."

Two cans of lager and no peanuts – we know how to throw a party!

PHOTOS: ED MILES BOOM BOX: £270 FROM URBAN OUTFITTERS WWW.URBANOUTFITTERS.CO.UK

UNDER THE WESTWAY
BLUR

Keith: "This is the music I hear when I'm having a dream."
Ian: "Doesn't it sound like 'Imagine' by John Lennon."
Julie: "It's definitely Beatles-esque."
Ian: "I rip off so many songs, I know when someone else is doing it."
Julie: "It's full of longing. It reminds you of the one that got away."
Mark: "This is music for old women, isn't it? Barry Manilow, all that stuff is coming back with the young couples, isn't it? At least with him [Damon Albarn], it's honest, innit?"
Wretch: "It sounds like something new done in an old way."
Keith: "When I met Blur at t'Brits, I thought Damon Albarn was going to be friendlier then he was. Everyone else in Blur were right nice. He wasn't 'orrible. I just thought he'd be friendlier. I met Noel Gallagher and I said, 'Can I shake your hand and tell my mates that I've met you?' Noel Gallagher is a lovely bloke."

BAD GIRLS
MIA

Keith: "I like this song but the video scares me."
Lindsey: "She's really pretty."
Wretch: "I think the video's sick, man. I like the lyrics as well."
Ian: "What about all the health and safety rules? You can't do that in a car."
Julie: "I think she's one of the most interesting women in music. It's heavy, it's groovy, it's sexy, it's clever, it's political."
Mark: "It's quite good this. It's quite different, it's not like dance music from the '80s or drum'n'bass and all that. It's not something anyone else is doing. It's interesting."
Ian: "I think it's wicked."
Keith: "I don't think it would be very good for an eight-year-old's birthday party."
Julie: "I think it'd be great for an eight-year-old. Isn't an eight-year-old's desire to hear good rhythm?"
Keith: "I can't remember being eight. It was ages ago!"

CLIMAX
USHER

Keith: "I'm not so excited about Usher since he touched Michael Jackson's coffin. He got a bit over-dramatic."
Ian: "I saw him in a hotel once and he said hello to me. He didn't have to, did he?"
Keith: "I got pally with Justin Timberlake. I don't know how that happened. He'd probably spit in my face now."
Wretch: "I like that they've put R&B over something different, more than the traditional good keys and great harmonies."
Ian: "It's not his best work. It's a bit of an anti-climax."

Mark's just been told the pubs are open

Wretch's hat has special hypnotising powers

The tree was chosen to match Keith's tan

WE ARE NEVER EVER GETTING BACK TOGETHER
TAYLOR SWIFT

Ian: "This sounds like it was written by a songwriting team, Auto-tune on full."
Keith: "I don't like it when she talks and I fucking can't stand it when they laugh in songs and you see them miming the laughter on a TV show."
Wretch: "What if the song's a joke?"
Mark: "Remember the criminals in [the 1970s TV version of] *Batman*? They'd laugh like this. (*Does massive evil laugh*). I like that."
Keith: "I just don't like fake laughing in songs."
Ian: "What about 'Thriller'?"
Keith: "That's theatrical laughing. They're not trying to go, 'We're having a good time, join our gang' in 'Thriller'.""
Julie: "Do you have Asperger syndrome here?"
Keith: "Why? Do you think I've got that?"
Julie: "I think this song is an example of Asperger syndrome. It's extremely literal."
Keith: "I'm a big fan of Tourette's. I think I've got that."
Wretch: "You've hit the nail on the head there!"

> "I RIP OFF SO MANY SONGS, I KNOW WHEN SOMEONE ELSE IS DOING IT"
> IAN WATKINS

PYRAMIDS
FRANK OCEAN

Keith: "This makes me imagine I'm taking out my wheelie bin and seeing the dustman driving away and I'm thinking, 'What am I going to do for the week now?' I like to put songs into context."
Will: "I love this. I think Frank Ocean is amazing. I like the way that the first bit of the song is about Cleopatra from Egyptian times and the second bit of the song is about a stripper called Cleopatra who works in a club called The Pyramid. I think he made a great record and I really like it."
Keith: "That's the best line anyone has said today!"
Lindsey: "I love the vocals. I think it's gutsy!"
Wretch: "It takes me about the length of this song to Hoover my house. It helps me in the morning."
Ian: "I'm going to try that! Ha!"

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REVIEWS

THE BIG OPINIONS ON THIS WEEK'S IMPORTANT RELEASES

Edited by Tom Howard

(Clockwise) Rufus Wainwright, Macca, Sharon Van Etten, James Mercer of The Shins

VARIOUS

CHRISTMAS RULES DECCA

In trying to recapture the golden age of Christmas songs, this mixed bag of hipsters and old-timers forgets the fun

The golden age of Christmas music is behind us. That's why, at this time of year, radio stations turn into Dave Lee Travis-era Radio 1. Step forward Macca and your 'Wonderful Christmastime'. Hello Slade, s'been a while! 'Step Into Christmas', Elton. Back away, Gary Glitter, your 'Another Rock'n'Roll Christmas' ain't welcome no more. People have tried Christmas songs since the '70s and '80s, of course, but never with quite the same gusto. Meekly adding the cheerful tinkle of sleigh bells to a tune does not a Christmas corker make. New comp 'Christmas Rules' tries to set the record straight, charging a mixture of current artists, oldies and the ubiquitous Macca with the task of recording a Christmas cover each.

Probably assuming that people will listen after Christmas dinner and fall asleep halfway through, it's toploaded with the bigger names. Up first are capital-letter-evading popsters fun., doing 'Sleigh Ride' – which they manage to make sound far less fun than an actual sleigh ride. Then The Shins do their tuneful indie thing on Paul McCartney's 'Wonderful Christmastime', closely followed by McCartney himself doing 'The Christmas Song (Chestnuts Roasting On An Open Fire)'. Neither are especially pleasurable, and the latter only confirms the fact that male pop singers of a certain age are as irresistibly drawn to covers of 'standards' as toddlers to an unattended chip pan, with results almost as disastrous. At least Rod Stewart had the good grace to confine them to his *own* Christmas album.

Standards dirty the album like yellow snow. Rufus Wainwright and Sharon Van Etten (or Von Etten as the sleeve has her) get all Tom Jones and Cerys Matthews on a smug 'Baby, It's Cold Outside'. It'd have to be minus 50 outside for me to stick by that piano. The cancer turns malignant with The Head And The Heart's 'What Are You Doing New Year's Eve?', on which the Seattle indie-folky-pop plops channel Michael Bublé like hapless horror-movie teens summoning the devil on a makeshift Ouija board.

The other foul thing about this album is its sense of worthiness: The Civil Wars are po-faced on 'I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day', and Punch Brothers treat 'O Come, O Come, Emmanuel' as if it were scripture. There's nothing wrong with a bit of spiritual calm around Christmas (I believe there *is* some kind of religious aspect to the season) but there's also a reason why Slade's 'Merry Xmas Everybody' is practically a carol. It's because it has a Brummie man screaming "*IT'S CHRISTMAS!*" like a pissed boss at an office party and it's brilliant. Artists on this album: think more like Noddy Holder. It bloody well *is* Christmas. There will be presents, and sickly drinks, and you may well cop off with somebody. Cheer up.

So who is this album for? Some of these bands are hipster faves, or former hipster faves now in that position where the fickle barometer of hipsterdom doesn't quite know whether they're still cool or not (hello, Holly Golightly). Then there are those oldies – the brilliant Irma Thomas doing 'May Ev'ry Day Be Christmas'; the aforementioned Paul McSanta. And lots of sundry Americana acts straying in like lost exiles from a Wilco house-party.

Is it for you? Is it for your mum? Is it for your cousin who works in graphic design? The answer to this question is: all of them and none of them. It's produced in collaboration with Hear Music, the label owned by Starbucks. It is, essentially, background music to soundtrack your next mince-pie-choco-chai-nog latte. But what, ultimately, does this leave us with? Just a compilation that's not as clever as it thinks it is, or as joyful as it should be. And next time, Starbucks, have some respect and get Cliff Richard involved. Jeez. ***Dan Stubbs***

3

BEST TRACKS: The Shins – 'Wonderful Christmastime', Irma Thomas – 'May Ev'ry Day Be Christmas', Calexico – 'Green Grows The Holly'

MACCA'S MATES

THE MORE OBSCURE ARTISTS ON 'CHRISTMAS RULES'

IRMA THOMAS
A 71-year-old singer from New Orleans who used to hang out with Aretha Franklin and Etta James. Won a Grammy in 2007.

ELEANOR FRIEDBERGER
One half of Fiery Furnaces (along with her big bro Matthew). Released her debut solo LP 'Last Summer' last year.

FRUIT BATS
American rockers from Chicago whose leader Eric D Johnson has played geetar for Califone and The Shins.

HOLLY GOLIGHTLY
Y'know, Holly Golightly! Who sang on The White Stripes' 2003 song 'It's True That We Love One Another'! Y'know?

SHERVIN LAINEZ, WIREIMAGE, REX FEATURES, GETTY, REDFERNS

VARIOUS ARTISTS

FESTIVUS HIGHLINE

At Christmas, albums like this jingly-jangly label showcase can expect a grade inflation of approximately 1.5-1.8 marks, depending on blood alcohol content, until the precise moment the wrapping paper hits the bin. The finger-pickin', crystal-voiced prettiness of Correatown's 'Christmas Time Is Here' and Glam Chops' punchy Glitter Band-take-a-Fall-workout 'Countdown To Christmas' don't stretch our goodwill. But the twee pop-by-numbers of (sigh) Skiffle And The Piffles and others is taxing, and by the time the hokey-tonking cobblers of The Werewandas' 'I Love You Santa Claus' arrives, your finger will be itching on the button marked 'Send Them To The Dickensian Workhouse'. But that's for tomorrow. ***Emily Mackay*** **6**

BEST TRACK: Glam Chops – 'Countdown To Christmas'

CEE LO GREEN

CEE LO'S MAGIC MOMENT WARNER BROS

The increasingly curious development of Cee Lo Green's career from R&B crooner to cuddly prime-time cartoon character takes its latest turn with the release of this, his first Christmas album. 'Magic Moment' veers between festive bonhomie and the season's habit of invoking more maudlin feelings, perhaps best typified by the Christina Aguilera duet 'Baby It's Cold Outside'. Naturally, The Muppets make an appearance (on 'All I Need Is Love'), as does Rod Stewart on 'Merry Christmas, Baby'. Ultimately though, this feels most like the result of a major-label brainstorming session titled 'Which Of Our Artists Will Fill A Santa Suit Best This Year?' ***David Renshaw*** **5**

BEST TRACK: 'All I Want For Christmas'

CASCADA

IT'S CHRISTMAS TIME ZOOLAND

German Eurodance heroes Cascada are as reliable as anyone at making flesh-stripping assault-pop. It's curious, therefore, that now Christmas is here they want to cuddle up to you so hard you puke tinsel. Surely Cascada can be depended upon to do away with festive sentimentality and make everyone dance shirtless while hopped up on 34 litres of Jägermeister? But no: Natalie Horler, DJ Manian and Yann Peifer have got serious. There's no 'Mistletoe And Poppers', just dreck like 'Jingle Bell Rock' and 'Silent Night'. They even keep manage to keep a straight face while singing a Coors-esque 'Away In A Manger'. Cascada just killed Christmas. ***Mof Gimmers*** **1**

BEST TRACK: Don't be ridiculous

ROD STEWART

MERRY CHRISTMAS, BABY VERVE

There's only one essential Rod Stewart purchase this Christmas: his autobiography. The hilarious, frank and self-deprecating story of how one of the great rock vocalists rose to fame and fortune, making fabulous music along the way before settling into his role as vendor of an endless succession of I-could-not-give-a-shit-any-more covers albums, of which this is the latest. Mary J Blige, Ella bloody Fitzgerald and the odious Cee Lo (see above) all phone in a hand, but... look, just get the book, OK? It's brilliant, and this isn't. ***Hamish MacBain*** **3**

BEST TRACK: 'A Nod Is As Good As A Wink... To A Blind Horse' [Are you sure? – Ed]

DENNY RENSHAW

Faces To Names...

What the reviewers are doing this week

DAVID RENSHAW

"Christmas this year will mainly revolve around my annual ice-skating trip. I'm very much the Christopher Dean (of Torvill and... fame) of the music scene."

EMILY MACKAY

"In my quest to roast chestnuts on an actual open fire, I am hiring an actual chimney sweep and forcing him to whistle Wild Beasts."

HAMISH MACBAIN

"I went to see The Rolling Stones at the O2 Arena in London and then interviewed Keith Richards (see page 14), both of which were life highpoints."

SUFJAN STEVENS

SILVER & GOLD ASTHMATIC KITTY

Yuletide's indiest champion roasts us a darker chestnut this year, but it's full of freaky festive flavour

Sufjan Stevens really likes Christmas. The Michigan maestro's obsession with all things Yuletide has now spawned 100-odd songs and two collections, the last of which – 2006's 'Songs For Christmas', has become as much a staple of any hipster's festive listening as Bright Eyes' 'A Christmas Album' and Low's 'Christmas'. This follow-up sees Sufjan's festive fascination darken. "Advent is ultimately about death. The end is near. You are going to die. Happy Holidays," read the liner notes.

Last time we heard from Stevens was on the chaotic future-pop thrum of 2010's 'The Age of Adz,' an album so disorientating and intense it was little surprise to hear the 37-year-old's next move would be a return to the relative fun and simplicity of his Yuletide recordings. Echoes of that album linger here – in particular on the woozy electronics that turn 'I'll Be Home For Christmas' into a codeine-fucked Christmas trip and the haunting upset of sinister acoustic guitar ballad 'Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!'. The darkness that gripped Stevens during his last outing seems to be still tugging at his heels.

But compelling as those moments are, more fun are the tracks where he puts his expansive imagination to use and lets go a little – 'Christmas Unicorn' for instance, which, as batshit insane as it is irresistibly infectious, opens out into a 12-minute tangle of drum-machine noises, symphonic flourishes and luminous synth melodies like a knot of tree-lights going haywire, before morphing into a cover of Joy Division's 'Love Will Tear Us Apart'. Elsewhere, The National's Aaron and Bryce Dessner turn up to cast their spell over 'Gloria', while 'Do You Hear What I Hear?' counts not just among Stevens' best Christmas songs, but his best songs full-stop.

In a career of constant reinvention that has seen him dally with folk, throbbing electronica and experimental future-pop, Stevens' fixation with Christmas has been one of two constants – the other being the unerring brilliance of his output (not counting his 2010 misstep, the 'All Delighted People' EP). Accompanying this release is a lengthy essay that attacks the concept of Christmas trees: "The Christmas tree has become nothing more than a symbol of environmental bondage," Stevens writes. "In a word, the Christmas tree is our bitch." And so long as he's making music this magical, if not entirely merry, we're all Stevens' slaves. ***Al Horner*** **7**

BEST TRACKS: 'Let It Snow! Let It Snow! Let It Snow!', 'Christmas Unicorn', 'Do You Hear What I Hear?'

LIVE

FROM PUBS TO ARENAS, THE WEEK'S TOP GIGS

Edited by Tom Howard

FOALS

THE LEOPARD, DONCASTER SUNDAY, DECEMBER 2

The venue may be small, but Yannis and co take their inventive output to staggering new heights

Foals' idiosyncratic way of warming up for new album 'Holy Fire' is a tour of towns they've rarely had cause to visit, playing venues about a tenth of the size they'd normally fill. We've missed them, the contrary buggers.

Filing onto The Leopard's tiny stage, only Yannis and fellow guitarist Jimmy Smith are able to fit at the front; their bandmates are stacked up behind them, disappearing into the low ceiling. They're flanked by a couple of bouncers on a fruitless mission to prevent the capacity crowd from spilling over.

Twinkling arpeggios propel the slow-burning instrumental opener 'Pavlov', a song that offers a slightly misleading introduction to Foals 3.0. It's only when they launch into a rejuvenated 'Balloons' two songs later that the influence of the 'Holy Fire' sessions becomes apparent: the riffs are that much beefier, the pace less frenetic, and the emphasis is on funky, muscular rhythms rather than the twitchy, fretwork-led Foals of old. Recently they told *NME* their new album was "swampy" with "grooves that are quite stinky" and that their "indie disco stuff's dead and buried with a chain of garlic around its neck". At the time we weren't quite sure what they were on about, but tonight all becomes clear.

Then comes 'Cleaver', which has Yannis imploring, "*I'm an animal, just like you/Oh Lord, what can I do?*" against a backdrop of scurrilous rock riffage. During the song's lascivious instrumental break he finds himself clambering up the back wall, standing with arms aloft, lost in the ecstasy of it all, while the band continue to unleash merry hell onstage. It's Foals' weirdest direction yet, so far from their math-rock beginnings you have to wonder if it's still them. But they still have the courage of their convictions – Foals have always been a band ready to speed off in the opposite direction from everyone else. Somehow, they always end up somewhere brilliant.

> ***Yannis gets lost in the ecstasy of it all, while the band unleash merry hell***

'My Number' deviates less from the sonic blueprint established on the first two albums, coming on like a tropical cousin of 'Miami' from 'Total Life Forever', played earlier alongside a masterful 'Spanish Sahara', for which Yannis barely needs to sing, such is the volume of the crowd's accompaniment. Debut album 'Antidotes' is well represented too, with the aforementioned 'Balloons' as well as 'Electric Bloom', 'Olympic Airways' and a raucous encore of 'Two Steps Twice', which ends with both Yannis and various microphones surfing above the crowd.

We might only get to hear a measly four 'Holy Fire' cuts tonight, but there's plentiful evidence to suggest that 2013 is in safe hands. It's a brave man indeed who'd bet against Yannis' post-'Inhaler' assertion that the third coming of his band is going to "smoke some bitches up, yo". ***Robert Webb.***

View From The Crowd

Digging the new songs?

Megan, 16, Doncaster
"The new songs sounded great! They're all instant classics."

Laura, 16, Doncaster
"My favourite of the newies is definitely 'Inhaler'. The riff is so good!"

Carys, 16, Doncaster
"I love the new direction – especially the basslines, which are so prominent now."

TOM MARTIN

TODDLA T SOUND

CONVERSE GIGS @ 100 CLUB, LONDON
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 5

Sheffield's techno-dub showman brings his multiple talents to London's rock'n'roll heart for one helluva party

The 100 Club wears its heritage on its sleeve. The walls are plastered with photos of blues pioneers, punk legends and, er, The Hives. It's a nook for stars on their way up and Toddla T – Thomas Bell to the taxman – is climbing that pole.

For the past two years, T's performed an impressive manoeuvre that has seen him go from poster boy for Sheffield's flagging UK bassline scene, to a big-name Radio 1 DJ with a sideline in producing massive pop albums. This past 12 months have seen him take his dancehall roadshow from Washington to Croatia, start work on a third album, and cap it all off by siring a child with his Radio 1 co-worker Annie Mac.

Mac's here tonight but keeping out of trouble as Roses Gabor offers gnarly support, spitting old-skool rhymes in alarmingly laddered tights and flashing the bling like Roxanne Shanté in cryogenic limbo from the '80s. It's a raw, engaging start, but Toddla T blows all that away with a video intro from fellow Sheffield folk hero Jarvis Cocker.

"Toddla T – who is he?" drawls Cocker, as laconic as he's contractually obliged to be. Suddenly T's bopping behind the decks, looking like Example in a wind tunnel. His shtick's all techno dub – fiery, relentless and fun. Favourites such as 'Cherry Picking' are chucked away early on like so much deep cut detritus. MCs Serocee and DRS vibe off each other to whip up the party.

A guest on last year's 'Watch Me Dance', '90s Brit soul star Shola Ama has become a bit of a muse to T and she rattles through her own hits 'You Might Need Somebody' and 'Taboo' as well as her Toddla collaboration 'Take Me Back'. Together they threaten to exhume UK garage in 2013. That might not even be a bad thing.

There are cheeky throwaways to keep the joint jumping, with DRS and Serocee freestyling over Sean Paul's 'Gimme The Light' and The Specials' 'Ghost Town'. But the control remains entirely in T's hands. He mugs and waves, ostentatiously twisting fictional knobs and pulls in the young, the old, the bearded and the bobble-hatted.

For years, Toddla T has been bringing the carnival to the people. Tonight he proves he's deserving of a framed snap behind the bar. ***Matthew Horton***

What Twitter Thought

@boggis1
"Toddla T sound is BIG!!! @TODDLA T smashing up the 100 club!"

@anniemacdj
"At the 100 Club to see Toddla T Sound. Support act @RosesGabor is smashing it"

@Frankiewade1
"When I go to a rave I go to get sweaty!! Tonight was unreal. Toddla T Sound smashed it..."

THE WEEKND
THE SUPPER CLUB, LONDON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25

In a small club on a deserted street under the Westway, The Weeknd is getting physical tonight. As in, The Weeknd is physically showing up. The thing about being an internet sensation – something Abel Tesfaye (aka The Weeknd) has been for two years – is that you only exist on the internet. So in terms of experiencing his music you're contained within the realms of speakers and iPods. It's a solitary enjoyment. He has the added obstacle of total invisibility; besides one or two B&W images of his face obscured by a puff of smoke, the audience know nothing about him, other than perhaps he's a really stoned Wizard Of Oz.

So tonight, this crowd finally feel the music... together... in a room, where the 22-year-old from Ontario will perform. Is he half-man half-machine? Is he a zitty geek? Does he have FIVE limbs?! No. Tesfaye is a humble yet cocky R&B vocal acrobat, here to get babies MADE.

He performs cuts from his first three free-download albums, now available physically and for money as 'Trilogy'. The set is heavy on the first and best LP, 'House Of Balloons', and climaxes during 'Wicked Games' and the title track, a drum-filled party jam sampling Siouxsie And The Banshees which is all the more thrilling given the stadium rock feel of his live band. But as well as thrills and lust, the crowd feel relief – The Weeknd can perform without a glitch. He may have played hard to get, but we've got him now. ***Eve Barlow***

FOXYGEN
SHACKLEWELL ARMS, LONDON
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 27

There are few bands who can pull off being funny while actually being good. But Foxygen have got this nailed.

The Cali quartet are not ones to take themselves too seriously. Their between-song patter is gloriously ridiculous, their music is giddy, exuberant and face-achingly infectious and they're not trying to be hilarious, see, they're just a bunch of wonderful weirdos and it tumbles out of every pore.

Defying those boring conventions of 'traditional song structure' and 'not using your forehead as a percussive instrument', Foxygen veer between MGMT hooks, Rolling Stones pomp and a million and one psychedelic, space-age wig-outs that defy labelling. The likes of 'Shuggie' and set-closer 'On Blue Mountain' combine about 10 (excellent) songs in one – held together by frontman Sam France, who howls, screams, runs into the crowd and hits himself throughout the set like an unhinged Mick Jagger.

This was a support show for a band called Hundred Waters (no, us neither) but by the time Foxygen's 30-minute slot is over, it's clear who owned the night. They leave, joshing they have to make way for "a real band instead of this shit". Best. Fun. Ever. ***Lisa Wright***

BOBBY WOMACK
THE FORUM, LONDON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25

Soul singers of this calibre often have a hype man to welcome them onstage. But Womack doesn't bring on the usual zoot-suited speed addict spitting a Pentecostal introduction along the lines of "Are you readah for tha GRAND DADDY OF SOOOOWLLL". Instead, Damon Albarn jogs onstage, whips up the cheers, and claps through Womack's opening acoustic gospel 'Deep River'. For a minute you wonder if you're here to watch Womack's latest and greatest reinvention or Damon loving it.

Albarn has been credited as the backroom architect of Womack's latest record 'The Bravest Man In The Universe', a record that revisits the raw grit of the earliest soul through minimalist fuzztronica and rap scatterbeats. But he's also Womack's most enthusiastic cheerleader, punching the air through the chilling subterranean throbs of 'Whatever Happened To The Times' *and* singing Lana Del Rey's parts on the chemical shuffle of 'Dayglo Reflection'. He's clearly in awe at breathing the same stage-dust as Womack.

After that half-hour preview of what Royal Albert Hall soul gigs will sound like in 2187, Womack returns with his full band to crack through an hour of classics such as 'Across 110th Street' and 'California Dreamin'' in his traditional brass-blasted style, but even then Damon bops in the wings, high-fiving trumpeters, beckoning on the bongo solos and kneeling in honour as Womack leaves the stage. The new album's title track claims the bravest man in the universe is "*the one who forgives first*", but Damon's a constant reminder that it's the 68-year-old legend who quits a comfortable furrow to embrace edgy new textures. The 'Mack is back. ***Mark Beaumont***

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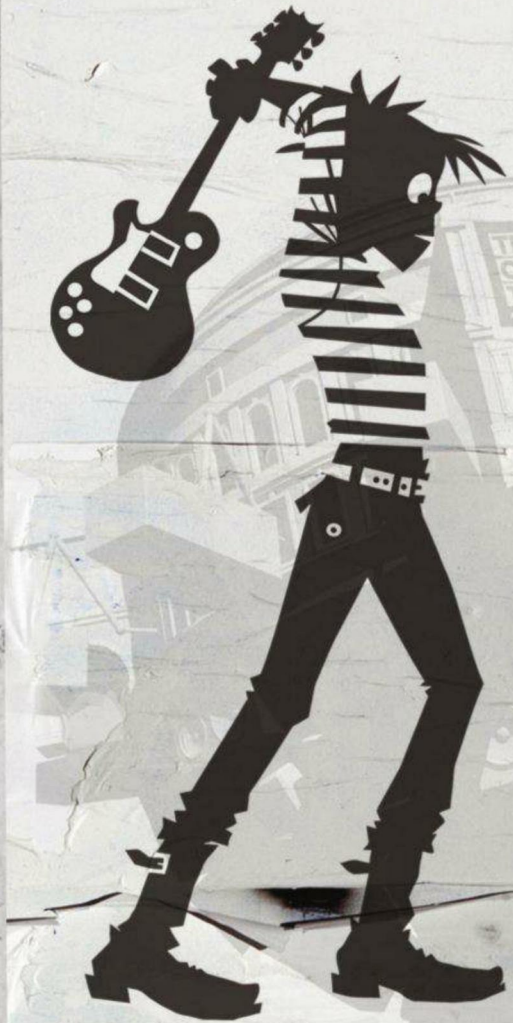

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MON 25 • LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY
TUE 26 • DUNDEE FAT SAMS
THU 28 • INVERNESS IRONWORKS

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SAT 02 • EDINBURGH PICTURE HOUSE
MON 04 • PORTSMOUTH PYRAMIDS CENTRE
TUE 05 • CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION
THU 07 • BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
FRI 08 • BLACKPOOL EMPRESS BALLROOM
SAT 09 • OXFORD O2 ACADEMY
MON 11 • LEICESTER O2 ACADEMY
TUE 12 • CARDIFF UNIVERSITY SOLUS
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SAT 13 WOLVERHAMPTON SLADE ROOMS
SUN 14 OXFORD O2 ACADEMY2
MON 15 BOURNEMOUTH OLD FIRE STATION
TUE 16 EXETER PHOENIX
THU 18 BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
FRI 19 CARDIFF GATE
SUN 21 BELFAST AUNTIE ANNIES
MON 22 LIVERPOOL MASQUE
WED 24 GLASGOW KING TUTS
THU 25 YORK FIBBERS
FRI 26 PRESTON 53 DEGREES

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THU 24/01/2013 LEEDS - COCKPIT 2 (14+)
FRI 25/01/2013 NEWCASTLE-U-LYME - FULL MOON (16+)
SAT 26/01/2013 EDINBURGH - ELECTRIC CIRCUS (16+)
SUN27/01/2013 GLASGOW - KING TUT'S (14+)
MON 28/01/2013 SHEFFIELD - SOYO (18+)
WED 30/01/2013 BRISTOL - EXCHANGE (14+)
THU 31/01/2013 GUILDFORD - BOILEROOM (16+)
FRI 01/02/2013 ALDERSHOT - WEST END CENTRE (U14 ACCOMP)
SAT 02/02/2013 BIRMINGHAM - TEMPLE (14+)
MON 04/02/2013 CAMBRIDGE - PORTLAND ARMS (U18 ACCOMP)
TUE 05/02/2013 - EXETER - CAVERN
WED 06/02/2013 CHELMSFORD - HOOGA (18+)
THU 07/02/2013 KINGSTON - NEW SLANG
FRI 08/02/2013 BRIGHTON - GREEN DOOR STORE
SAT 09/02/2013 SOUTHAMPTON - LENNONS (18+)
MON 11/02/2013 LIVERPOOL - SHIPPING FORECAST (18+)
TUE 12/02/2013 MIDDLESBOROUGH - MIXTAPE @ KEYS (18+)
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THU 14/02/2013 CHESTER - THE COMPASS (18+)
FRI 15/02/2013 PRESTON - 53 DEGREES (16+)
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FRIDAY 01 FEBRUARY
LIVERPOOL THE KAZIMIER
SATURDAY 02 FEBRUARY
GLASGOW BROADCAST
SUNDAY 03 FEBRUARY
NEWCASTLE THE CLUNY
TUESDAY 05 FEBRUARY
NOTTINGHAM BODEGA
WEDNESDAY 06 FEBRUARY
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NEW ALBUM 'POLLEN'
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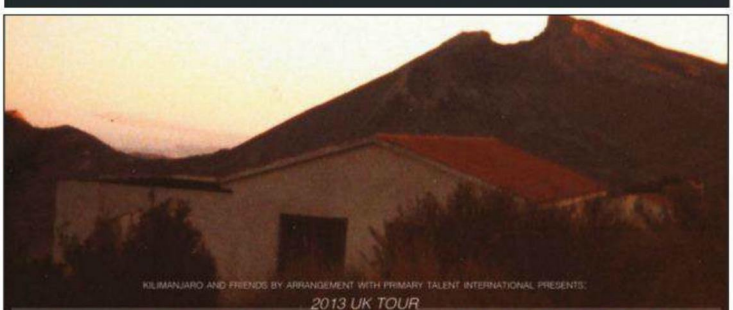

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JIM LOCKEY and THE SOLEMN SUN

	JANUARY			FEBRUARY	
30TH	MILTON KEYNES	THE CRAUFURD ARMS	15TH	NEWCASTLE	THE CLUNY
31ST	CAMBRIDGE	THE PORTLAND ARMS	16TH	EDINBURGH	ELECTRIC CIRCUS
	FEBRUARY		17TH	GLASGOW	KING TUT'S
01ST	OXFORD	THE JERICHO	18TH	CARLISLE	THE BRICKYARD
02ND	READING	SOUTH ST ARTS CENTRE	20TH	WREXHAM	CENTRAL STATION
03RD	BRIGHTON	THE PRINCE ALBERT	21ST	SHEFFIELD	CORPORATION
04TH	SOUTHAMPTON	JOINERS	22ND	LEEDS	BRUDENELL SOCIAL CLUB
06TH	BATH	MOLES	23RD	HULL	ADELPHI
07TH	PLYMOUTH	WHITE RABBIT	24TH	NOTTINGHAM	BODEGA
08TH	TRURO	B-SIDE AT BUNTERS	26TH	BIRMINGHAM	HARE & HOUNDS
09TH	EXETER	CAVERN	27TH	NORWICH	WATERFRONT
10TH	BRISTOL	LOUISIANA	28TH	LONDON	THE BORDERLINE
11TH	CARDIFF	CLWB IFOR BACH		MARCH	
12TH	MANCHESTER	THE CASTLE HOTEL	01ST	GUILFORD	THE BOILEROOM
13TH	LIVERPOOL	SHIPPING FORECAST	02ND	CHELTENHAM	FROG & FIDDLE

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THU	21	LONDON BUSH HALL	0844 871 8803
SAT	23	BIRMINGHAM HMV INSTITUTE TEMPLE	0844 871 8803
SUN	24	MANCHESTER RUBY LOUNGE	0161 832 1111
MON	25	GLASGOW KING TUTS	0844 499 9990
TUE	26	LEEDS BRUDENELL SOCIAL CLUB	0113 245 5570

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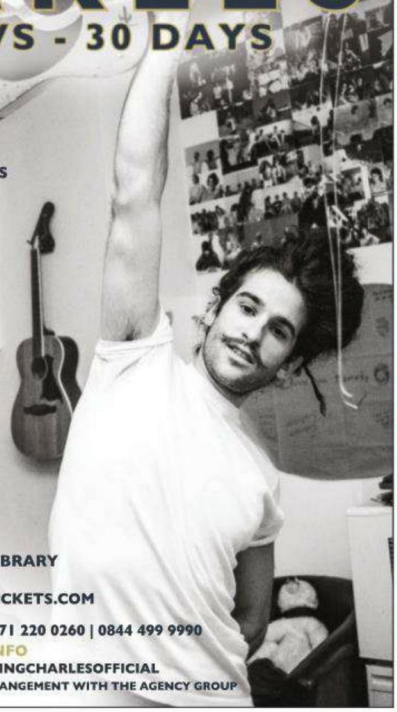

APRIL 2013
01 NOTTINGHAM RESCUE ROOMS
02 COLCHESTER ARTS CENTRE
03 LEICESTER O_2 ACADEMY2
04 NORWICH WATERFRONT
05 WREXHAM CENTRAL STATION
06 STOKE SUGARMILL
07 WOLVERHAMPTON SLADE ROOMS
08 LIVERPOOL KAZIMIER
09 DONCASTER LEOPARD
10 COVENTRY KASBAH
11 PORTSMOUTH WEDGEWOOD ROOMS
12 OXFORD O_2 ACADEMY2
13 BRISTOL FLEECE
14 EXETER CAVERN
15 FALMOUTH PAVILIONS
16 CARDIFF GATE
17 BRIGHTON THE HAUNT
18 LONDON O_2 SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE
19 LEEDS COCKPIT
20 SHEFFIELD LEADMILL
21 YORK DUCHESS
22 NEWCASTLE W34
23 ABERDEEN LEMON TREE
24 EDINBURGH ELECTRIC CIRCUS
25 GLASGOW KING TUTS
26 BELFAST MCHUGHS
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28 MANCHESTER SOUND CONTROL
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22 • LIVERPOOL KAZIMIER
23 • NORWICH WATERFRONT
28 • CARDIFF SOLUS
29 • BRISTOL FIDDLERS

FEBRUARY
24 • NOTTINGHAM RESCUE ROOMS
25 • LEEDS THE COCKPIT
26 • GLASGOW ORAN MOR
28 • MANCHESTER HMV RITZ

MARCH
01 • WOLVERHAMPTON WULFRUN HALL
02 • SHEFFIELD LEADMILL
04 • BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2
05 • EXETER PHOENIX
06 • PORTSMOUTH WEDGEWOOD ROOMS
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07 GLASGOW KING TUTS
08 EDINBURGH ELECTRIC CIRCUS
09 YORK DUCHESS
10 PRESTON 53 DEGREES
12 NOTTINGHAM THE BODEGA
13 NORWICH ARTS CENTRE
14 LONDON XOYO
18 BRIGHTON THE HAUNT
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31 GLASGOW KING TUTS
FEBRUARY
01 MANCHESTER CASTLE HOTEL
02 WIGAN INDIEPENDENCE
03 YORK DUCHESS
05 NEWCASTLE THINK TANK
06 LEEDS COCKPIT 2
07 HULL FRUIT
08 CHESTER COMPASS
09 BIRMINGHAM HMV INSTITUTE TEMPLE
10 LEICESTER SOUNDHOUSE
11 LONDON BARFLY
12 BRIGHTON HAUNT
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PLUS GUESTS
MONDAY 04 FEBRUARY
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GABRIEL BRUCE
PLUS GUESTS
TUESDAY 05 FEBRUARY
LONDON HOXTON BAR & KITCHEN
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PLUS GUESTS
WEDNESDAY 06 FEBRUARY
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HURTS
PLUS GUESTS
THURSDAY 07 FEBRUARY
LONDON HEAVEN
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TOY
PLUS GUESTS
TUESDAY 12 FEBRUARY
LONDON SCALA
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EVERYTHING EVERYTHING
PLUS GUESTS
WEDNESDAY 13 FEBRUARY
LONDON HEAVEN
0844 847 2351

KODALINE
PLUS GUESTS
THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY
LONDON DINGWALLS
020 7403 3331

DOLDRUMS
PLUS GUESTS
WEDNESDAY 20 FEBRUARY
LONDON CORSICA STUDIOS
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TIM BURGESS
PLUS GUESTS
THURSDAY 21 FEBRUARY
LONDON BIRTHDAYS
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SAVAGES
PLUS GUESTS
THURSDAY 21 FEBRUARY
LONDON ELECTRIC BALLROOM
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...AND YOU WILL KNOW US BY THE TRAIL OF DEAD
DEAP VALLY + DRENGE
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PLUS GUESTS
MONDAY 25 FEBRUARY
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FIDLAR
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MONDAY 25 FEBRUARY
LONDON THE GARAGE
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Jagwar Ma
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08 HEBDEN BRIDGE TRADES CLUB
09 POCKLINGTON ARTS CENTRE
10 MIDDLESBROUGH WESTGARTH SC
11 GLASGOW ORAN MOR
12 GATESHEAD THE SAGE GATESHEAD
14 OXFORD TOWN HALL
15 OXFORD TOWN HALL SOLD OUT
16 FOLKESTONE QUARTERHOUSE
18 NEWBURY NEW GREENHAM ARTS
19 POOLE MR KYPS
20 PONTADAWE ARTS CENTRE
21 KINGSTON NEW SLANG AT MCCLUSKYS

MARCH 2013
11 LIVERPOOL KAZIMIER
12 MANCHESTER BAND ON THE WALL
13 LEEDS COCKPIT
15 NORWICH OPEN
16 SHEFFIELD LEADMILL
17 PRESTON 53 DEGREES
19 PORTSMOUTH WEDGEWOOD ROOMS
20 BRIGHTON CONCORDE 2
21 BATH KOMEDIA
23 LEAMINGTON SPA ASSEMBLY
24 EXETER PHOENIX
25 GLOUCESTER GUILDHALL
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Tuesday 12th February
GLASGOW BARROWLAND
Thursday 14th February
DUNFERMLINE ALHAMBRA
Friday 15th February
MANCHESTER O2 APOLLO
Saturd SOLD OUT bruary
BRIDLINGTON SPA
Monda SOLD OUT bruary
NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY
Tuesday 19th February
PRESTON GUILD HALL
Thursd SOLD OUT bruary
CHELTENHAM RACECOURSE
Friday SOLD OUT ruary
WOLVERHAMPTON CIVIC HALL
Saturd SOLD OUT bruary
EXETER GREAT HALL
Monda SOLD OUT bruary
SOUTHAMPTON GUILDHALL
Tuesd SOLD OUT bruary
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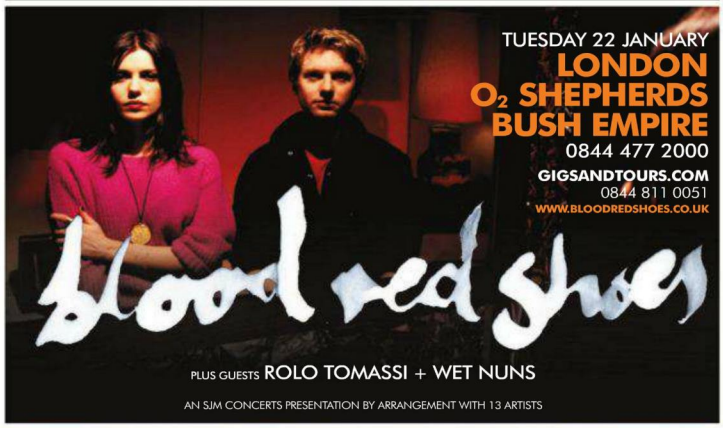

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Fri 17 Guilford Boileroom
Sat 18 Nottingham Rescue Rooms
Sun 19 Norwich Waterfront
Mon 20 Glasgow King Tuts
Tue 21 Manchester Academy 2
Wed 22 London Koko
Thu 23 Newcastle O2 Academy2
Fri 24 CarlisleThe Brickyard
Tue 28 Gloucester Guildhall
Wed 29 Cardiff CF 10
Thu 30 Plymouth White Rabbit
Fri 31 Exeter Phoenix
JUNE 2013
Sat 01 Newton Abbot Lemonfest

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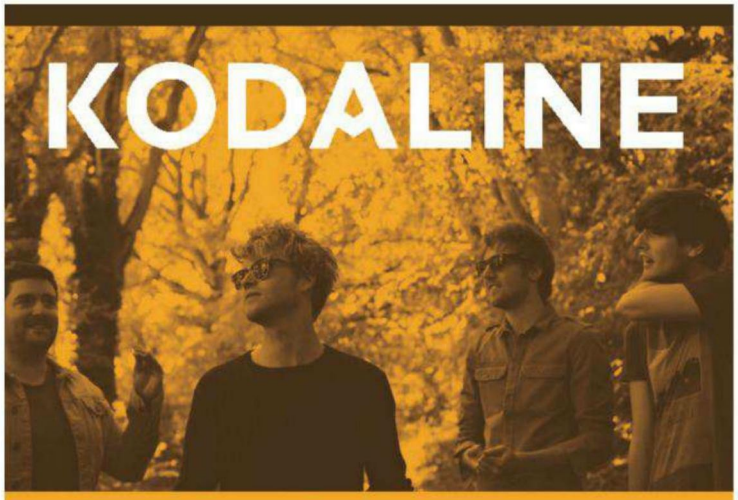

PLUS GUESTS

FEBRUARY 2013
07 YORK FIBBERS
08 EDINBURGH CABARET VOLTAIRE
09 COVENTRY KASBAH [TRICKY DISCO CLUB NIGHT]
11 BRIGHTON GREEN DOOR STORE
12 CAMBRIDGE PORTLAND ARMS
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TUE 15 **LEEDS** HOLY TRINITY SOLD OUT URCH
THU 17 **BRIGHTON** ST MARY'S CHURCH
FRI 18 **MANCHESTER** ST SOLD OUT S
SAT 19 **STOCKTON** GEORGIA SOLD OUT EATRE
MON 21 **GLASGOW** ORAN MOR
TUE 22 **BRISTOL** ST GEORGES
THU 24 **LONDON** HACKNEY SOLD OUT PIRE
SAT 26 **DUBLIN** BUTTON FACTORY

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JANUARY 2013
THU 24 NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY
FRI 25 MANCHESTER O2 APOLLO
SAT 26 MANCHESTER O2 APOLLO EXTRA DATE
MON [illegible] HAMPTON GUILDHALL
TUE 29 NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY
THU 31 CARDIFF UNIVERSITY

SOLD OUT

FEBRUARY 2013
FRI 01 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY EXTRA DATE
SAT 02 BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY
[illegible] GLASGOW BARROWLAND
THU 07 LEEDS O2 ACADEMY
FRI 08 LONDON O2 ACADEMY BRIXTON

SOLD OUT

EXTRA DATES ADDED DUE TO OVERWHELMING PUBLIC DEMAND

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THU	07	BRI SOLD OUT CONCORDE 2
FRI	08	NOR SOLD OUT RTS CENTRE
SAT	09	BRIS SOLD OUT EKLA
MON	11	CAMBRIDGE JUNCTION
TUE	12	BIRMINGHAM HMV LIBRARY
		VENUE UPGRADED
THU	14	OXFORD O2 ACADEMY
SAT	16	SHEFFIELD LEADMILL
SUN	17	LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY2
WED	20	GLASGOW ORAN MOR
THU	21	NEWCASTLE O2 ACADEMY2
FRI	22	MANCHESTER ACADEMY 2

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MANCHESTER ACADEMY 1 - FRI 08 FEB
LEEDS O2 ACADEMY - SAT 09 FEB
GLASGOW O2 ACADEMY - MON 11 FEB
NOTTINGHAM ROCK CITY - TUE 12 FEB
LIVERPOOL O2 ACADEMY - WED 13 FEB

FRI 15 FEB - NORWICH UEA
SAT 16 FEB - BIRMINGHAM O2 ACADEMY
SUN 17 FEB - CARDIFF UNI GREAT HALL
TUE 19 FEB - BRISTOL O2 ACADEMY
WED 20 FEB - BOURNEMOUTH O2 ACADEMY
THU 21 FEB - BRIGHTON DOME

SAT 23 FEB - LONDON O2 ACADEMY BRIXTON

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London show presented by 3A Entertainment

DHP Concerts & friends by arrangement with CAA presents

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23 GLOUCESTER GUILDHALL	02 HULL FRUIT
24 CARDIFF THE GLOBE	03 SHEFFIELD QUEENS SOCIAL
25 NORWICH ARTS CENTRE	06 LONDON KOKO
27 PORTSMOUTH WEDGEWOOD ROOMS	07 MANCHESTER SOUND CONTROL
28 PRESTON 53 DEGREES	08 STOKE SUGARMILL

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25/01 Leeds Brudenell Social Club
26/01 Porth The Factory
27/01 Bristol The Fleece
29/01 Wolverhampton Robin 2
30/01 London O_2 Academy Islington
31/01 Hertford Corn Exchange
01/02 Reading Sub 89

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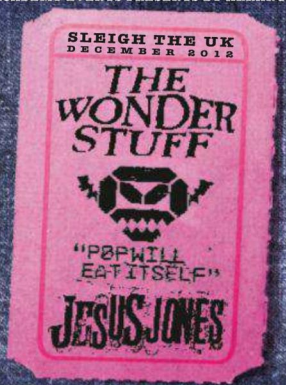

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THU 20th DEC
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FRI 21st DEC
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GIG GUIDE

THE UK'S BIGGEST GUIDE TO THE WEEK AHEAD

Edited by Siân Rowe

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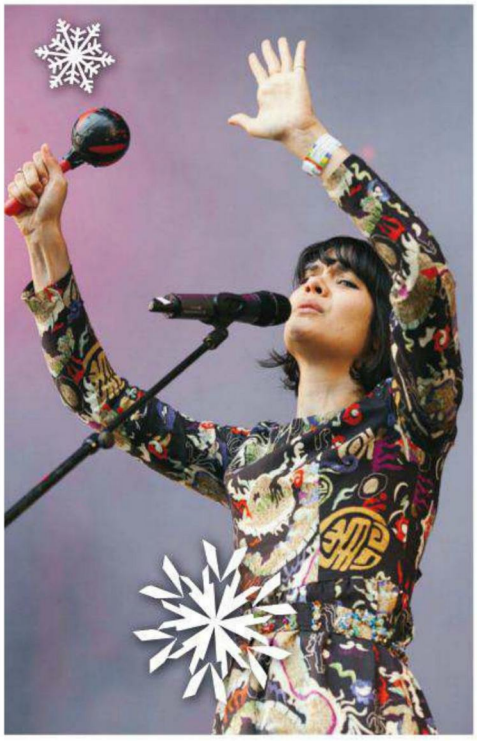


FIELD DAY

STARTS: London Victoria Park, May 25

DON'T MISS

If you're looking for some 'tips for 2013' to namedrop at fashionable Christmas parties (and who isn't!), look no further than the line-up for 2013's Field Day festival, this time taking place on May Bank Holiday weekend. Alongside a few recognisable names – Animal Collective, Bat For Lashes and Django Django all play – there will be fierce competition for the annual 'Oh fuck, we're playing a small tent but are waayyyy popular' award. Grimes played to an over-capacity crowd in 2012 but 2013 is wide open. Will Charlie Boyer And The Voyeurs break through? Will Chvrches overcome the hindrance of having a 'V' where the 'U' should be to find fame? Will Disclosure make it huge even though they're just two boys wearing Adidas tracksuit tops and pushing buttons? Other bands playing include Daughter, How To Dress Well, Virals, Vondelpark and Fucked Up.

BRETON

STARTS: London BFI, Jan 11

The former squat band (yes, they were forced to move out) soundtrack 60 minutes of silent film with their own music. Expect to do a lot of chin-scratching.

METZ

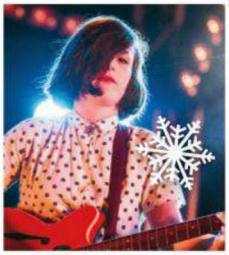
STARTS: Manchester Soup Kitchen, Jan 28

Canadian troublemakers Metz set their sights on a UK tour. Fans in Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds, Brighton and London should get their stomping shoes on.

JULIO BASHMORE

STARTS: Bristol Secret Location, Feb 8

'Au Seve' was one of 2012's dancefloor anthems. Now Julio's playing a set of secret shows. See him *somewhere* in Bristol, London, Leeds and Manchester.



VERONICA FALLS

STARTS: London St Leonard's Shoreditch, Feb 8

The dreamy Bella Union band head off on a UK tour, visiting London, Norwich, Leeds, Sheffield, Glasgow and Newcastle.

GIRLS NAMES

STARTS: Leeds The Cockpit, Feb 22

Northern Irish lo-fi(ish) group Girls Names follow some European dates with a short trip around the UK. See them in Leeds, Glasgow, Manchester and London.

RUDIMENTAL

STARTS: London Village Underground, Feb 22

The production quartet who had a Number One with their first single 'Feel The Love' headline this date at the London warehouse club.

SLASH

STARTS: Nottingham Capital FM Arena, Feb 28

The ex-Guns N' Roses guitarist and hat wearer plays two dates in early 2013. Feel the leathery force in Nottingham and Blackpool's Empress Ballroom.

NOVELLA

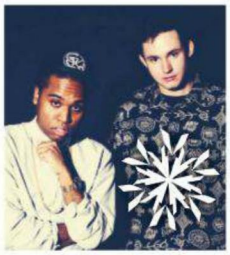
STARTS: London The Lexington, Mar 8

The *Radar*-tipped band have announced details of a show early next year. They'll play songs from their debut EP and new single 'Mary's Gun' at the Lexington in March.

PURITY RING

STARTS: London St John-At-Hackney Church, Mar 14

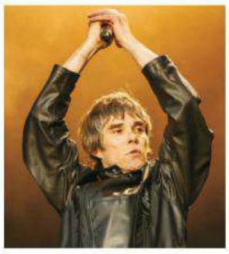
The creepy Canadians have announced a one-off show in this London church. If their lightshow's still working fans will be in for a treat.



PLEASURE PRINCIPLE WEEKENDER

STARTS: Newquay, Trevelgue Holiday Park, Apr 26–28

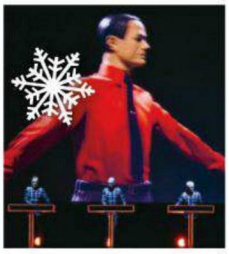
Electronic weekender with TNGHT, Rustie, Deadboy, John Talabot and Koreless.



ISLE OF WIGHT FESTIVAL

STARTS: Isle Of Wight Seaclose Park, Jun 13–15

Festival announcements are already upon us. The Stone Roses headline on Friday night and Bon Jovi take the top spot on Sunday.



SONAR

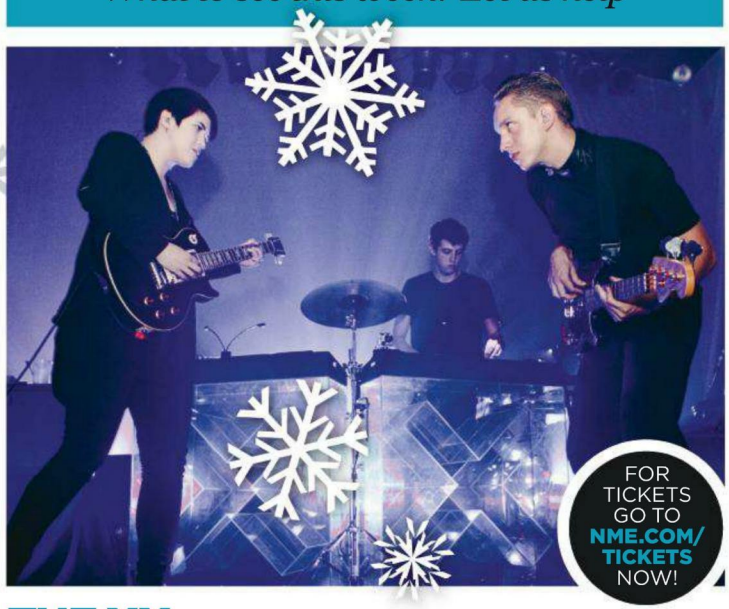
STARTS: Barcelona, Various, Jun 13–15

The multimedia festival celebrates its 20th year. Kraftwerk headline, with support including Pet Shop Boys, Two Door Cinema Club and Fantastic Mr Fox.

RICHARD JOHNSON, DAN KENDALL, GUY EPPEL, DAN DENNISON, ANDY WILLSHER, CARLY SCOTT, V ARBELET, TOM MARTIN, DANNY NORTH

PICK *of the* WEEK

What to see this week? Let us help



THE XX

STARTS: Wolverhampton Civic Hall, Dec 12

NME PICK

If you're somebody who thinks The xx are boring just because they wear a lot of black and don't let their egos outweigh the songs, then you haven't seen their live show. Since starting out as a band who looked like they absolutely *hated* performing, they've turned into an impressive and surprisingly forceful live act who inspire word-for-word singalongs and mass swooning. Jamie's bass and drum sounds are nicely amped up, so it's even possible to try out some woozy dance moves to all the tracks from 'xx' and 'Coexist'. Still not convinced? In an interview in 2009 they joked that there'd be dancing girls and cartwheels at an xx gig. Katy Perry, watch your back. The band play Wolverhampton, Portsmouth, Bristol and Brixton before heading to Paris for two dates. The UK tour ends at Brighton Centre on December 20.

Everyone's Talking About THE PRODIGY

STARTS: London O2 Academy Brixton, Dec 18

To coincide with the 15th anniversary reissue of 'The Fat Of The Land', The Prodigy play two dates at the O2 Academy Brixton. As anyone who caught Liam Howlett and Keith Flint at Download will know, their firepower hasn't been dulled over the years. Jaguar Skills, AraabMuzik and Caspa provide support.

Don't Miss ALLAH-LAS

STARTS: Liverpool Leaf, Dec 12

Garage rock is definitely not new, it's definitely not clever and it definitely hasn't got high hygiene standards. What it definitely *is* though, is sweaty, debauched fun. California's Allah-Las' self-titled album was one of the genre's best this year so give them a good UK send-off at dates in Liverpool and Manchester.

Radar Star HOOKWORMS' PSYCHMARE BEFORE XMAS

STARTS: Manchester Soup Kitchen, Dec 20

Three *Radar* favourites line up for a Christmas party. Hookworms will batter you with rugged motorik noise (and a few grooves), Kult Country will frazzle your synapses, and (former?) WU LYF member Tom McLung appears as Francis Lung. It'll be totally festive, maaaaan.

WED/THU

December 12/13

WEDNESDAY, DEC 12

ABERDEEN
Frank Turner Lemon Tree 012 2464 2230

BIRMINGHAM
Charlie Lankester And The Mojo Killers O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Follow You Home The End 0121 448 0797
Fool's Glory Roadhouse 0121 624 2920
The Other Tribe/Shades Hare & Hounds 0870 264 3333

BOURNEMOUTH
Electric Six Old Fire Station 0120 2503888
Orbital O2 Academy 0870 4772000

BRIGHTON
Coves/The Peppermint Beat Band Green Door Store 07894 267 053

BRISTOL
Boris Fleece 0117 945 0996
The Escapists Thekla 0871 3100000
Glass City Vice/Shogun Glu Croft (Main Room) 0117 987 4144
Rancid O2 Academy 0870 4772000

CARDIFF
Ed Solo The Moon Club
Future Of The Left Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199
Local Sports Team/Gindrinker Undertone 029 2022 8883
Race Horses The Gate 0871 230 1094

DUNDEE
Native Beat Generator 01382 229226

EDINBURGH
Ben Miller Captain's Bar 0131 6682312
The Minutes Electric Circus 0131 226 4224

GLASGOW
Bombskare Ivory Blacks 0141 221 7871
Crazy Arm 13th Note Cafe 0141 553 1638
Katatonia Cathouse 0141 248 6606
The Rasmus The Garage 0141 332 1120
Stooshe Oran Mor 0141 552 9224
Vukovi King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

LEEDS
The Glass Caves/French Soul Party/ Seasfire Cockpit 0113 244 3446
Roller Trio Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

LEICESTER
Acoda/Eleven Eleven Lock 42
Jess Morgan The Cookie Jar 0116 2531212

LIVERPOOL
TRC O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

LONDON
Admiral Fallow Scala 020 7833 2022
Auctions For The Promise Club O2 Academy Islington 0870 477 2000
The Black Keys/The Maccabees 02 08 70 701 4444
Blitz Kids Borderline 020 7734 5547
Dragonette Cargo 020 7749 7840
Ellie Goulding O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
Friendly Fires/The Horrors/Trailer Trash Tracys XOYO 020 7729 5959
Futures Garage 020 7607 1818
Happy Graveyard Orchestra Zigfrid Von Underbelly 020 7613 1988
Hey Sholay Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Holly And The Wolf St Moritz 020 74370525
Junkie Kut Power Lunches Arts Cafe
Luke Sital-Singh St Pancras Old Church
Malcolm Middleton Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080
Mmoths/Minotaur Shock Shacklewell Arms 020 7249 0810
Pinkunoizu Sebright Arms 020 7729 0937
Silver Story Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773
Squeeze HMV Forum 020 7344 0044
Thee Faction/Eight Rounds Rapid Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191
Treetop Flyers Power's Bar 020 7287 3834
Ulterior The Lexington 020 7837 5387
The Wolfhounds MacBeth 020 7739 5095
Zodiac N Black 100 Club 020 7636 0933

MANCHESTER
Chris Cohen Trof Fallowfield 0161 224 0467
Lower Dens Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019
Natalie Duncan Gorilla 0161 832 1111
Saint Etienne HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355

MILTON KEYNES
Russian Winter Stables 01908 280800

NEWCASTLE
Little Angels O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

NORWICH
Cold In Berlin/Tortoise Family Connections Arts Centre 01603 660 352

NOTTINGHAM
Enter Shikari/Cancer Bats Rock City 08713 100000
The Famous Class Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484

PETERBOROUGH
TV Smith/The Destructors Met Lounge 01733 566100

POOLE
Bad Manners Mr Kyps 01202 748945

SHEFFIELD
Epica Corporation 0114 276 0262

ST ALBANS
The Fizzy Indigo Lamps Of Ghana Horn 01727 853 143

WAKEFIELD
Broken Snooty Fox 01924 374455

WOLVERHAMPTON
The xx Civic Hall 01902 552121
It Bites Slade Room 0870 320 7000

YORK
Skindred The Duchess 01904 641413

THURSDAY, DEC 13

ABERDEEN
Slade Music Hall 01224 641122

BIRMINGHAM
The Damned O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
Madness LG Arena 0121 780 4133
Murdering Monica/Meow Meow Actress & Bishop 0121 236 7426
Our Dystopia O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Sinners Highway Scruffy Murphy's 0121 333 3201

BRIGHTON
Admiral Fallow Green Door Store 07894 267 053
Bad For Lazarus The Hope 01273 723 568
The Common Tongues/Holy Vessels Blind Tiger 01273 681228
Johnson And The Believers Mesmerist 01273 328542
Saint Etienne Concorde 2 01273 673 311
Imperial Leisure Sticky Mike's Frog Bar 01273 749 465

BRISTOL
Electric Six O2 Academy 0870 4772000
Falling Stacks/Infrared Bear Mother's Ruin 0117 925 6969
Ghouls Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221
The Other Tribe Thekla 08713 100000
Subhumans Fleece 0117 945 0996

CARDIFF
Dopamine Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199
Mumford & Sons Motorpoint Arena 029 2022 4488
Pinkunoizu Buffalo Bar 029 2031 0312
The Singing Adams Undertone 029 2022 8883

EDINBURGH
Ballboy Electric Circus 0131 226 4224
Rufus Wainwright Usher Hall 0131 228 1155

GATESHEAD
Black River Three Tuns 0191 487 0666

GLASGOW
Action Bronson O2 ABC2 0141 2045151
Beth Orton Oran Mor 0141 552 9224
Deacon Blue Royal Concert Hall 0141 353 8000
Ellie Goulding O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
The Hives O2 ABC 0870 903 3444
Lower Dens King Tut's 0141 221 5279

GLOUCESTER
The Mediaeval Baebes Cathedral 01452 528095

GUILDFORD
Hildamay Star Inn 01483 532 887

HUDDERSFIELD
Crazy Arm Parish 01484 468801

LEEDS
Dan Beesley & The SSSSS Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
Down The Machine Carpe Diem 0113 243 6264
Trevor McKee Empire 01132 420868
White Noise Wardrobe 0113 2223434

LONDON
Age Of Pilots/The Screaming Kicks Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773
Arthur Rigby & The Baskervilles Wilmington Arms 020 7837 1384
The Black Keys/The Maccabees 02 0870 701 4444
Bo Keeney Sebright Arms 020 7729 0937
Dreadzone Garage 020 7607 1818
Emperor Yes The Wheelbarrow
Gentleman's Dub Club XOYO 020 7729 5959
Karnataka Scala 020 7833 2022
Lovelife Barfly 0870 907 0999
Madeon Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006
Mika Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
Mithras Power Lunches Arts Cafe
Money Union Chapel 020 7226 1686
Pinback Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Roller Trio The Lexington 020 7837 5387
Sharks Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
Squeeze O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000
Transformer Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358

MANCHESTER
Allah-Las Night & Day Cafe 0161 236 1822
Beth Rowley The Castle 0161 237 9485
Lady Fortune/Foreign Hands Trof Fallowfield 0161 224 0467
Little Angels HMV Ritz 0161 2364355
The Rasmus Club Academy 0161 832 1111
The Slow Show Roadhouse 0161 228 1789
Stone Sour O2 Apollo 0870 401 8000
2 Many DJs/Soulwax/Kindness/ The 2 Bears Warehouse Project 0161 835 3500

NEWCASTLE
The Famous Class/This Years Winner Is O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
The 1975 Head Of Steam 0191 232 4379

NORWICH
Dappy UEA 01603 505401
Matthew P Epic Studios 01603 727727
Tom Pearce Bicycle Shop 01603 625 777

NOTTINGHAM
TRC Rock City 08713 100000

PORTSMOUTH
The xx Guildhall 023 9282 4355

PRESTON
Trembling Bells/Three Dimensional Tanx Continental 01772 499 425

SOUTHAMPTON
Canterbury The Cellar 023 8071 0648
Talisman Talking Heads 023 8055 5899

STOKE ON TRENT
Cancer Bats Sugarmill 01782 214 991

WAKEFIELD
Twisted Wheel The Hop 0871 230 1094

YORK
Panda Cubs The Duchess 01904 641 413
UK Subs Fibbers 01904 651 250

JESS BAUMUNG, TOM MARTIN, DEAN CHALKLEY, DAN DENNISON, STUART LEECH

FRIDAY
December 14

BIRMINGHAM
Carousel Circus The End 0121 448 0797
Enter Shikari HMV Institute 0844 248 5037
Jackmaster Hare & Hounds 0870 264 3333
Kitten Pyramid/Idle Playthings O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Swim With Sharks Irish Centre 0121 622 2314
TRC/Polar Asylum 0121 233 1109

BOURNEMOUTH
The Damned O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
New Killer Shoes/Boolays The Winchester 01202 552 206

BRIGHTON
British Sea Power/Rozi Plain The Haunt 01273 770 847
Laurent Garnier Concorde 2 01273 673 311

BRISTOL
The xx Colston Hall 0117 922 3683
Speech Debelle Start The Bus 0117 930 4370

CARDIFF
The Other Tribe Clwb Ifor Bach 029 2023 2199

COLCHESTER
Goodiepal Arts Centre 01206 500900

CREWE
Hex/Flux The Box 01270 257 398

DARTFORD
Buzzcocks Mick Jagger Centre 01322 291100

DERRY
Delorentos Masons Bar 028 7136 0177

DUNDEE
Slade Caird Hall 01382 434941

GLASGOW
Flutes Nice'n'Sleazy 0141 333 9637
Rufus Wainwright O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
Slow Club Oran Mor 0141 552 9224

HATFIELD
Labrinth The Forum 0844 477 2000

HOVE
Kings Mews Brunswick 01273 735254

LEEDS
Apollo's Basement The Library 0113 2440794
Cud Cockpit 0113 244 3446

LEICESTER
The Atlantics Donkey 0116 270 5042
Seven Deadly Soundhouse 07830 425555

LIVERPOOL
Cold Shoulder Eric's Club
Raise The Youth/Broken English O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
The Roughneck Riot Mello Mello 0151 707 0898
Stealing Sheep Kazimier 0871 230 1094

LONDON
Andy C/Chase & Status Fabric 020 7336 8898
Blonde Bunny/Defectors Camden Rock 0871 230 1094
Chris Cohen Lexington 020 7837 5387
The Dirty Flaws Garage (Upstairs) 0871 230 1094
Down To Nothing/Brutality Will Prevail Underworld 020 7482 1932
DJ Outwork Garage 020 7607 1818
The Escapists Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
FC20 Purple Turtle 020 7383 4976
Halfway To New York 100 Club 020 7636 0933
Happa/Sunless 97 Birthdays
The Hives Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
Kassem Mosse Basing House 020 7033 1900
Los Pepes Power Lunches Arts Cafe
Madness O2 0870 701 4444
The Moonjets Barfly 0870 907 0999
Mosca XOYO 020 7729 5959
Native Roses Troubadour Club 020 7370 1434
Orbital/Nathan Fake O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
Philip Glass Ensemble Barbican Centre 020 7638 8891
Rancid HMV Forum 020 7344 0044
The Rasmus Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006
Saint Etienne O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000
Imperial Leisure Club Surya 020 7713 6262
12 Dirty Bullets Club NME @ KOKO 0870 4325527

MANCHESTER
Action Bronson Academy 3 0161 832 1111
Cancer Bats NQ Live 0161 834 8180
Cosmos Collapse Wilbraham St Ninian's Church
Fatboy Slim/Madeon Warehouse Project 0161 835 3500
Kid British Sound Control 0161 236 0340
Mika HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355
Y Niwl Night & Day Cafe 0161 236 1822

NEWCASTLE
Admiral Fallow Cluny 0191 230 4474
Dog In A Box The Station 0871 230 1094
Epica O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
Eric Prydz Digital 01912 619755

NOTTINGHAM
Dappy Rock City 08713 100000

OTLEY
Hope & Social Courthouse 01943 467466

SHEFFIELD
The Famous Class Corporation 0114 276 0262
Jeramiah Ferrari Penelope's 01246 436 025

SOUTHAMPTON
Delays Joiners 023 8022 5612
Natives Mo'Club 023 8022 6439

SOUTHSEA
Lip Service Cellars 02392 826249

STOKE ON TRENT
Feed The Rhino Underground 01782 219944
Six Towns Sugarmill 01782 214 991

SWANSEA
Peepshow The Vault 01792 456 110

TONBRIDGE
Marcus Bonfanti Band West Kent College 0845 207 8220

TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Canterbury Forum 0871 277 7101

WAKEFIELD
Raith Snooty Fox 01924 374455

WINDSOR
Blitz Kids Firestation 01753 866865

WOLVERHAMPTON
Stone Sour Civic Hall 01902 552121
Under The Influence Slade Room 0870 320 7000

YORK
Dreadzone Duchess 01904 641 413
Rat Scabies Stereo 01904 612237

SATURDAY/SUNDAY
December 15/16 *March 11*

Enter Shikari, HMV Institute, Birmingham, Saturday

SATURDAY, DEC 15

ABERDEEN
The Little Kicks The Tunnels 01224 211121

BEDFORD
Don Broco Esquires 01234 340120

BIRMINGHAM
Aittia/Sister Shotgun O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Ancient Ascendant/Morgue Orgy Scruffy Murphy's 0121 333 3201
The Beat Town Hall 0121 780 3333
Castrovalva Sunflower Lounge 0121 632 6756
Dappy O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
Enter Shikari/Cancer Bats HMV Institute 0844 248 5037
Enter The Reaper Actress & Bishop 0121 236 7426
Shapes/Them Wolves Flapper 0121 236 2421

BOURNEMOUTH
Stone Sour O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

BRIGHTON
Jackmaster Digital 01273 202407

BRISTOL
Little Angels O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
Trouble On The Green Fleece 0117 945 0996

BURY ST EDMUNDS
Solko/Cathedral Cars The Hunter Club 01284 748280

CARDIFF
Hell's Bent Undertone 029 2022 8883

CARLISLE
Falling Red/Hellion Rising Brickyard 01228 512 220

DUNDEE
Bad Name Beat Generator 01382 229226

EDINBURGH
Cauldstane Slap Captain's Bar 01316 682312

EXETER
Birdskulls Cavern Club 01392 495 370

GLASGOW
Madeon Arches 0141 221 4001
Malcolm Middleton King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
No Limits The Attic
The Twilight Sad Barrowland 0141 552 4601

HOVE
Cerys Matthews Old Market 01273 325440
The Impellers Brunswick 01273 735254

HULL
Buzzcocks The Welly 01482 221113

LEEDS
Being A Tiger Carpe Diem 0113 243 6264
Ellie Goulding O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
Neville Staple Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
The Prowlers Duck & Drake 0113 246 5806
Scabies & James The Well 0113 2440474
Unmade Bed/Runners Wharf Chambers
We Were Frontiers Cockpit 0113 244 3446

LEICESTER
Charlie And The Martyrs Donkey 0116 270 5042
The Dissenters/The Healers Musician 0116 251 0080
Yeah Yeah Noh/Frantic Drift Abbey 0116 270 4007

LIVERPOOL
Echo & The Bunnymen O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
The Hummingbirds Zanzibar 0151 707 0633
Ian McNabb Kazimier 0871 230 1094
Young Tines O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

LONDON
Basement Jaxx Ministry Of Sound 020 7378 6528
Beards/Candy Highway Power Lunches Arts Cafe
Bok Bok/Girl Unit Secret Warehouse
Charles Dexter & The Imagineers Nambucca 020 7272 7366
The Damned Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
Death In June Electrowerkz 020 7837 6419
The Dub Ratz Barfly 0870 907 0999
Electric Six O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000
The Filthy Dukes Queen Of Hoxton 020 7422 0958
Follow You Home Garage (Upstairs) 0871 230 1094
High Highs/Best Friends Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
I Ludicrous/We Buy Gold Hope & Anchor 020 7354 1312
Labyrinth Ear/Vuvuvultures Shacklewell Arms 020 7249 0810
Lawnmower Deth Garage 020 7607 1818
Los Campesinos!/Among Brothers Assembly Hall 020 8577 6969
MJ Cole Cable Club 020 7403 7730
Orbital/Nathan Fake O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
Philip Glass Ensemble Union Chapel 020 7226 1686
Rancid HMV Forum 020 7344 0044
Stanton Warriors Jamm 020 7274 5537
Treetop Flyers Albion 020 7241 0360

MANCHESTER
Absolva/Exit State NQ Live 0161 834 8180
The Devin Townsend Project HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355
The Hives Academy 0161 832 1111
Maceo Plex/Laurent Garnier/The Art Department Warehouse Project 0161 835 3500
Molotov Jukebox Club Academy 0161 832 1111
Slow Club Gorilla 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE
The Agency Cluny 2 0191 230 4474
Hug Cluny 0191 230 4474
Junkie Kut/Skat Injector Northumberland Arms 0191 232 6048
Vendetta O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

NORWICH
The Collective Epic Studios 01603 727727
Meltdown Waterfront 01603 632717
Throb Brickmakers 01603 441118

NOTTINGHAM
The Rasmus Rock City 08713 100000
Seasfire Stealth 08713 100000

PRESTON
Twisted Wheel 53 Degrees 01772 893 000

READING
Screama Ballerina Rising Sun 0118 957 2974

SHEFFIELD
The Talk/The Colliers Plug 0114 276 7093

SOUTHAMPTON
The Escapists Unit 02380 225612
Pale Seas/Wild Smiles Lennons 023 8057 0460

STOKE ON TRENT
Blitz Kids Underground 01782 219944
Wasted Life The Famous Lion 01782 846780

ST ALBANS
Catsticks/The Nobodies Horn 01727 853 143

TONBRIDGE
Toxic Twins West Kent College 0845 207 8220

WAKEFIELD
Euphonix Snooty Fox 01924 374455

WOLVERHAMPTON
The Lines Civic Hall 01902 552121
Surviving Savannah Numa Bar

YORK
A Joker's Rage Fibbers 01904 651 250
Captain Hotknives/The Swindells Stereo 01904 612237

SUNDAY, DEC 16

BEDFORD
Don Broco Esquires 01234 340120

BIRMINGHAM
Ellie Goulding O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
The Forged Roadhouse 0121 624 2920
Insolito O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Tim Burgess Glee Club 0870 241 5093

BRIGHTON
Once Over/The Junk Prince Albert 01273 730 499
Trip To Dover Sticky Mike's Frog Bar 01273 749 465

BRISTOL
Crazy Arm Croft (Main Room) 0117 987 4144
Wolfhound/Bird Jaguar Fleece 0117 945 0996

CARDIFF
Jets To Zurich/Bankrupt Pug Buffalo Bar 02920 310312
Nylon Sky Undertone 029 2022 8883

EDINBURGH
Bobby Nicholson Captain's Bar 01316 682312

GLASGOW
Colt 45 Pivo Pivo 0141 564 8100
Mika O2 ABC 0870 903 3444
Molotov Jukebox King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279

HULL
Nine Black Alps New Adelphi 01482 348 216

LEEDS
The Erics Duck & Drake 0113 246 5806
Thin Lizzy O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

LEICESTER
Her Name Is Calla Firebug 0116 2551228
Hildamay Soundhouse 07830 425555

LIVERPOOL
Dan Baird's Homemade Sin Eric's Club

LONDON
The xx O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
Action Bronson Garage 020 7607 1818
Asaf Avidan & The Mojos XOYO 020 7729 5959
Birds In Row Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
Dawn Hunger Shacklewell Arms 020 7249 0810
Enter Shikari/Cancer Bats Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
Goldheart Assembly Albion 020 7241 0360
Patch & The Giant Gallery Cafe
Rancid HMV Forum 020 7344 0044
Subhumans Grosvenor 0871 223 7992

MANCHESTER
Laurent Garnier Warehouse Project 0161 835 3500
Natives Sound Control 0161 236 0340
Pete Roe The Castle 0161 237 9485
Silent Screams/Martyr Defiled Club Academy 0161 832 1111
Stereophonics Academy 0161 832 1111

NEWCASTLE
American Girl Star Inn 0191 222 3111

NORWICH
Squeeze UEA 01603 505401
Then Comes Chaos Brickmakers 01603 441 118

SHEFFIELD
Slow Club Queens Social Club 0114 272 5544

ST ALBANS
The Skints Horn 01727 853 143

TRURO
Ruarri Joseph Bunters Bar 0187 2241 220

TUNBRIDGE WELLS
Tom Williams & The Boat The Forum 0871 277 7101

WAKEFIELD
The Distance Snooty Fox 01924 374455

WOLVERHAMPTON
Jump The Shark Slade Room 0870 320 7000

MON/TUE
December 17/18

MONDAY, DEC 17

ABERDEEN
Molotov Jukebox The Tunnels 01224 211121

BIRMINGHAM
Nice N Easy Baldwin 0121 744 3356

BOURNEMOUTH
Crazy Arm The Anvil 01202 295898

BRIGHTON
Paper Dollhouse Green Door Store 07894 267 053
The Red Jumpsuit Apparatus/ Hawthorn Heights The Haunt 01273 770 847
Stooshe Concorde 2 01273 673 311

BRISTOL
Sheelanagig Tobacco Factory 0117 902 0344
Shlomo The Speigeltent 0117 3789663
Tim Burgess Thekla 08713 100000

CARDIFF
Native Buffalo Bar 02920 310312

EDINBURGH
Ewan Forfar Captain's Bar 01316 682312

EXETER
Project EDM Cavern Club 01392 495 370

GLASGOW
Emmy The Great & Tim Wheeler Oran Mor 0141 552 9224
Natives King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Rat Scabies Pivo Pivo 0141 564 8100
Stereophonics O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
The View Barrowland 0141 552 4601

GUILDFORD
From Forests/Blaenavon Boileroom 01483 539 539

LONDON
Berri Txarrak Garage 020 7607 1818
Bridgebound/Mozes Dirty South 020 8852 1267
Editors/The Temper Trap/The Courteeners O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
Endless/Repair To Ruin Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773
Enter Shikari/Cancer Bats Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
The Keepsakes Barfly 0870 907 0999
Slow Club KOKO 020 7388 3222
Theophilus London Cargo 020 7749 7840
Thin Lizzy O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000
The Wildhearts HMV Forum 020 7344 0044

MANCHESTER
Ellie Goulding Academy 0161 832 1111

Jake Bugg, HMV Institute, Birmingham, Tuesday

NEWCASTLE
Katatonia O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
Red Letters Trillians 0191 232 1619

STOKE ON TRENT
Moral Panics/Borders Sugarmill 01782 214 991

TUESDAY, DEC 18

BIRMINGHAM
Hallway District Adam & Eve 0121 693 1500
Jake Bugg HMV Institute 0844 248 5037
Natives O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000

BOURNEMOUTH
Dappy O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

BRIGHTON
Slow Club The Haunt 01273 770 847

BRISTOL
Circle Sea/Disruptive Influence Croft (Front Bar) 0117 987 4144

CARDIFF
Thistledown/Ellie Makes Music 10 Feet Tall 02920 228883

EDINBURGH
The Black Charge Electric Circus 0131 226 4224

GATESHEAD
Eden Rejects/Unsinkable Inflatables Three Tuns 0191 487 0666

LEEDS
Backyard Burners Milo 0113 245 7101
Marmozets Cockpit 0113 244 3446

LEICESTER
Pete Roe/Sam Brookes The Cookie Jar 0116 2531212

LIVERPOOL
Cancer Bats/Always The Quiet Ones O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000

LONDON
Dingus Khan/Towns Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
Fear Factory KOKO 020 7388 3222
Gnarwolves Birthdays
Heavens Basement Barfly 0870 907 0999
Mumford & Sons O2 0870 701 4444
New Infection/Straw Dogs MacBeth 020 7739 5095
The Prodigy O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
Rekks Jamm 020 7274 5537
Revere/Little Night Terrors Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
Stooshe Scala 020 7833 2022
Young Husband/The Red Lapels The Lexington 020 7837 5387

NEWCASTLE
Roller Trio Cluny 0191 230 4474

NORWICH
Blind Spirit Brickmakers 01603 441 118

NOTTINGHAM
Katatonia Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484
Molotov Jukebox Bodega Social Club 08713 100000

SHEFFIELD
Wet Nuns Harley 0114 275 2288

SOUTHAMPTON
Ellie Goulding Guildhall 023 8063 2601
Native Joiners 023 8022 5612

WAKEFIELD
Nine Black Alps The Hop 0871 230 1094

YORK
Magpie/The Birdman Rallies Basement 01904 612 940

WED/THU
December 19/20

WEDNESDAY, DEC 19

BIRMINGHAM
The Bombergs Yardbird 0121 212 2524
Diamond Lil/Our Days Wasted Adam & Eve 0121 693 1500
M-Tron Actress & Bishop 0121 236 7426

BOURNEMOUTH
Gnarwolves Blue Line Studios

BRIGHTON
The Common Tongues Green Door Store 07894 267 053
The Modern Exposition Latest Music Bar 01273 687 171

BRISTOL
Beak>/Savages/DROKK Exchange 0117 9304538
Chekhov's Guns Croft (Front Bar) 0117 987 4144
Dappy O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
Francis Fear Croft (Main Room) 0117 987 4144
Lizzee Rascal Fleece 0117 945 0996
Slow Club The Speigeltent 0117 3789663

CARDIFF
Bad Manners The Globe 07738 983947
Cwpwrdd Nansi Gwdihw Cafe Bar 029 2039 7933
Laurence Made Me Cry 10 Feet Tall 02920 228883

DUNDEE
The View Caird Hall 01382 434941

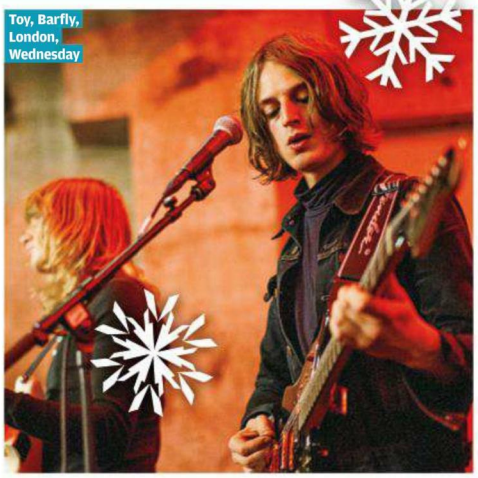
EDINBURGH
Cerys Matthews The Caves 0131 557 8989

LEEDS
Quip Wharf Chambers

LEICESTER
Chris Conway Musician 0116 251 0080

LONDON
Crazy Arm MacBeth 020 7739 5095
Dexy/Makeout Tactics/The Trees Scream Lounge 020 8667 0155
Ed Harcourt Cecil Sharp House 020 7485 2206
Happy Mondays Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
James Yorkston Shacklewell Arms 020 7249 0810
JP Cooper/The Lottery Winners Hoxton Square Bar & Kitchen 020 7613 0709
The Little Victory Old Blue Last 020 7613 2478
Male Bonding/Mazes/Novella Sebright Arms 020 7729 0937
Mute Swimmer Slaughtered Lamb 020 8682 4080
Paul Weller/Miles Kane HMV Hammersmith Apollo 0870 606 3400
The Prodigy/AraabMuzik O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
The Rose Tinted Zigfrid Von Underbelly 020 7613 1988
The Sassys/Men Of Good Fortune Power Lunches Arts Cafe
Sauna Youth Garage (Upstairs) 0871 230 1094
Status Quo O2 0870 701 4444
There Goes Sunday Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773
Toy Barfly 0870 907 0999

MANCHESTER
Emmy The Great & Tim Wheeler Deaf Institute 0161 330 4019
Ren Harvieu Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392


Toy, Barfly, London, Wednesday

NORWICH
Enter Shikari/Cancer Bats UEA 01603 505401

PORTSMOUTH
Nine Black Alps Wedgewood Rooms 023 9286 3911

PRESTON
Duke Special 53 Degrees 01772 893 000

SOUTHAMPTON
Katatonia Talking Heads 023 8055 5899

STOKE ON TRENT
In The Cards Sugarmill 01782 214 991

THURSDAY, DEC 20

BATH
YouLoveHerCozShesDead Moles 01225 404445

BIRMINGHAM
Breakfast At Charlies/The Regulars O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
In Denial Flapper 0121 236 2421
The Toy Hearts/Troumaca Hare & Hounds 0870 264 3333

BRIGHTON
The xx Centre 0870 900 9100

BRISTOL
Evil Eye/Disorder Croft (Front Bar) 0117 987 4144
Katatonia Fleece 0117 945 0996

CARDIFF
Means Heinz/The Jelas Undertone 029 2022 8883

DUNDEE
The Proclaimers Caird Hall 01382 434941

GATESHEAD
Onemanrevival Three Tuns 0191 487 0666

GLASGOW
Jonny And The Robots/How To Swim Pivo Pivo 0141 564 8100
Mungo's HiFi Berkeley Suite

LEEDS
Crows Bones Howard Assembly Room 0113 243 9999
Martin Stephenson & The Daintees Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866

LONDON
Autoheart Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
Duke Special O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000
Echo Lake/Novella Monto Water Rats 020 7813 1079
Emmy The Great & Tim Wheeler Scala 020 7833 2022
Frank Hamilton Barfly 0870 907 0999
Glam Chops/No Cars Buffalo Bar 020 7359 6191
Happy Mondays Roundhouse 020 7482 7318
Iced Earth Electric Ballroom 020 7485 9006
Kidnap Kid/Vuvuvultures Birthdays
The Pogues/Frank Turner O2 0870 701 4444
The Prodigy O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
Stereophonics Troxy 020 7734 3922
Stubb Black Heart 020 7428 9730
Swim Good Garage (Upstairs) 0871 230 1094
Vice Squad Garage 020 7607 1818

MANCHESTER
The Beat/The Minx Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392
Hookworms/Kult Country/ Francis Lung Soup Kitchen 0161 236 5100
Michael McGoldrick Band On The Wall 0161 832 6625
Sex Hands/Bad Grammar/Base Ventura Kraak 07855 939 129
Slam Cartel Retro Bar 0161 274 4892

NEWCASTLE
Pointless View O2 Academy 0870 477 2000

NORWICH
Bad Manners Waterfront 01603 632 717
Brooke Sharkey Bicycle Shop 01603 625 777
Nine Black Alps Arts Centre 01603 660 352

NOTTINGHAM
Father Neptune's Sea Lions Rescue Rooms 0115 958 8484
Matt Gold Bodega Social Club 08713 100000

SHEFFIELD
Hamerex South Sea 0114 268 2992

SOUTHAMPTON
Drawings/Due Kie Avondale House 023 8022 3405

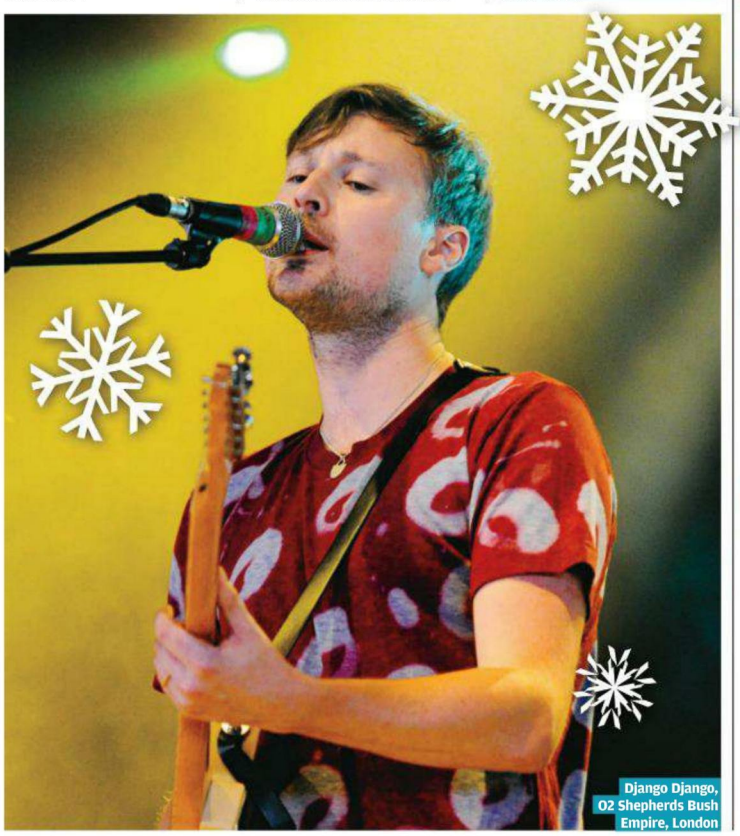
STOKE ON TRENT
This Game Of Ghosts/Betrayal Within The Ranks Sugarmill 01782 214 991

GET IN THE GIG GUIDE!

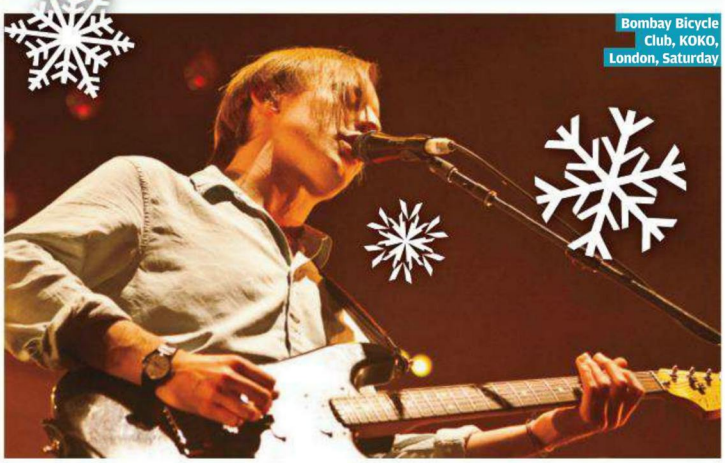
DO YOU WANT TO GET YOUR BASH INCLUDED IN THE NME WEEKLY GIG GUIDE? GO TO NME.COM/GIGS AND SUBMIT YOUR LISTING FOR FREE. YOU MUST SUBMIT DETAILS AT LEAST THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE GIG DATE

FRIDAY
December 21

ABERDEEN
The Ruckus Lemon Tree 01224 642230
BIRMINGHAM
Call Atlantis O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
Wrapped In Plastic Flapper 0121 236 2421
BRIGHTON
Twin Brother Dome 01273 709709
BRISTOL
Dreadsquad Start The Bus 0117 930 4370
Dub Pistols Soundsystem The Lanes 0117 325 1979
Gaz Brookfield Fleece 0117 945 0996
Popes Of Chilitown Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221
The Reacharounds Thunderbolt 07791 319 614
CARLISLE
Expression Brickyard 01228 512 220
DERRY
Damian McGinty Nerve Centre 028 7126 0562
EDINBURGH
The Rezillos The Liquidroom 0131 225 2564
GLASGOW
Black Sun 13th Note Cafe 0141 553 1638
Culann King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
Hardwell Arches 0141 221 4001
The Revolt/Bay View O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151
GUILDFORD
The Moulettes Boileroom 01483 539 539
LEEDS
The Beat Brudenell Social Club 0113 243 5866
The Omega Particle The Well 0113 2440474
The Wonder Stuff O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
LEICESTER
Diesel Park West Musician 0116 251 0080
LIVERPOOL
Dominic Dunn/Milly Pye Parr St Studios 0151 707 3727
Marley Chingus The Caledonia 0151 709 5909
Martha Reeves & The Vandellas Eric's Club
Reva Shipping Forecast 0151 709 6901
Space O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
They're Coming To Get You Barbara O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
LONDON
Bananarama/2 Unlimited/Steps O2 0870 701 4444
Brains Mcloud Barfly 0870 907 0999
Caspa/Breakage Fabric 020 7336 8898
Coki/Swindle Cable Club 020 7403 7730
Crypsis The Unicorn 020 7485 3073
David Devant & His Spirit Wife The Lexington 020 7837 5387
Django Django O2 Shepherds Bush Empire 0870 771 2000
The Lucky Strikes/The Dreaming Spires Windmill 020 8671 0700
The Sonic Jewels Camden Rock 0871 230 1094
Soulwax/2 Many DJs/Kindness O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
Spizz Oil Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773
Touchstone Borderline 020 7734 5547
Whisky Blood Rattlesnake Of Angel 020 7354 0471
MANCHESTER
AAAK/Stalagmites Kings Arms 0161 832 3605
Cast Sound Control 0161 236 0340
Danny Mahon Ruby Lounge 0161 834 1392
Mikey DON Band On The Wall 0161 832 6625
Pins/Female Band Fuhrer Bunker
MILTON KEYNES
Nine Black Alps Craufurd Arms 01908 313 864
Zion Train/The Defekters Pitz 01908 660392
NEWCASTLE
Martin Stephenson & The Daintees Cluny 0191 230 4474
Natasha Haws Cluny 2 0191 230 4474
PLYMOUTH
Crazy Arm White Rabbit 01752 227522
READING
Private Jet/Borderline:Fire South Street Arts Centre 0118 960 6060
SHEFFIELD
Bison/Drymbago Plug 0114 276 7093
Joe Carnall & The Book Club Queens Social Club 0114 272 5544
Reasons To Be Cheerful New Barrack Tavern 0114 234 9148
SOUTHAMPTON
The Horse Talking Heads 023 8055 5899
STOKE ON TRENT
Blue Origin Underground 01782 219944
The Get Alongs/The Control Sugarmill 01782 214 991
ST ALBANS
The Zipheads Horn 01727 853 143
SWANSEA
The Somethings/Spitfire The Vault 01792 456 110
WAKEFIELD
Skiprat Snooty Fox 01924 374455
YORK
Toby Jepson Fibbers 01904 651 250


Django Django, O2 Shepherds Bush Empire, London

SAT–MON
December 22–24


Bombay Bicycle Club, KOKO, London, Saturday

SATURDAY, DEC 22

BIRMINGHAM
Cold Fields O2 Academy 3 0870 477 2000
The Crooked Empire Flapper 0121 236 2421
Kill Timers/Eleven Miles Between The End 0121 448 0797
Peace Rainbow 0121 772 8174
Rockastella Actress & Bishop 0121 236 7426
BRIGHTON
This Is The Kit/Early Ghost Latest Music Bar 01273 687 171
BRISTOL
Marmalade Sky The Lanes 0117 325 1979
CARDIFF
City Bass Undertone 029 2022 8883
Veto Gwdihw Cafe Bar 029 2039 7933
DERRY
Scott Bond St Columb's Hall 028 7126 2880
DUNDEE
The Rezillos Beat Generator 01382 229226
EDINBURGH
This Feeling/Fridge Magnets Voodoo Rooms 0131 556 7060
GLASGOW
Gerry Lyons O2 ABC2 0141 204 5151
GUILDFORD
Ben Pearce Boileroom 01483 539 539
LEEDS
Jimmy Holland The Well 0113 2440474
Little Devils Duck & Drake 0113 246 5806
The Ratistas Packhorse 0113 245 3980
LEICESTER
Echolocation The Cookie Jar 0116 2531212
LIVERPOOL
Cast/The Hummingbirds O2 Academy 0870 477 2000
LONDON
Berlin Blonde Nambucca 020 7272 7366
Bombay Bicycle Club/Trophy Wife KOKO 020 7388 3222
Citieswillfall Dublin Castle 020 7485 1773
Hopeless Heroic Borderline 020 7734 5547
James Zabiela/Pangaea Electric Brixton 020 7274 2290
Madness O2 0870 701 4444
Moxie Queen Of Hoxton 020 7422 0958
Pocket Satellite Bull & Gate 020 7485 5358
Simonne & The Dark Stars Monto Water Rats 020 7813 1079
Smoke And Mirrors Barfly 0870 907 0999
Those Amongst Us Are Wolves Zigfrid Von Underbelly 020 7613 1988
Vision Fortune/Yola Fatoush Power Lunches Arts Cafe
2 Many DJs/James Murphy/Kindness O2 Academy Brixton 0870 477 2000
MANCHESTER
Happy Mondays/808 State Victoria Warehouse 0161 660 7000
The Rainband HMV Ritz 0161 236 4355
Special Duties Star & Garter 0161 273 6726
MILTON KEYNES
Deferred Success/Tim Ten Yen Watershed 07935 641 660
NEWCASTLE
The Cornshed Sisters/Our Imaginary Friends Star And Shadow Cinema 0191 2610066
The Me Me's Star Inn 0191 222 3111
NORWICH
Run Like Rivers Brickmakers 01603 441 118
Shackleton Arts Centre 01603 660 352
NOTTINGHAM
ICON/Line Of Fire Salutation Inn 0115 950 4627
New Model Army Rock City 08713 100000
SHEFFIELD
Everly Pregnant Brothers Leadmill 0114 221 2828
SOUTHAMPTON
Peers Unit 02380 225612
Sean McGowan Lennons 023 8057 0460
STOKE ON TRENT
The Black Mirrors The Famous Lion 01782 846780
Fallen Inquest Underground 01782 219944
Sworn To Oath/Tussk Sugarmill 01782 214 991
SWANSEA
The Underdogs The Vault 01792 456 110
WOLVERHAMPTON
My Great Affliction/Diamond Lil Slade Room 0870 320 7000
YORK
Morderstein Fibbers 01904 651 250

SUNDAY, DEC 23

BIRMINGHAM
The Twang O2 Academy 2 0870 477 2000
BRISTOL
Troy Ellis/Jah Garvey Fleece 0117 945 0996
CARDIFF
One Track Mind Buffalo Bar 02920 310312
GLASGOW
Dead Man Fall King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
This Feeling/Fridge Magnets Maggie May's 0141 548 1350
LEEDS
Nikki Allan Seven Arts 0113 262 6777
Resurgence Duck & Drake 0113 246 5806
The Solicitors New Roscoe 0113 246 0778
LEICESTER
No Way Back Musician 0116 251 0080
LONDON
Kunt And The Gang New Cross Inn 020 8692 1866
Matisyahu O2 Academy Islington 0870 477 2000
Tempus Fusion Nambucca 020 7272 7366
This Is The Kit/Sweet Baboo The Lexington 020 7837 5387
NEWCASTLE
Minotaurs Cluny 2 0191 230 4474
Tom Williams & The Boat/The Cornshed Sisters Hoults Yard 0191 265 4282
SOUTHAMPTON
Henry Cluney Talking Heads 023 8055 5899
STOKE ON TRENT
3's A Riot Sugarmill 01782 214 991
WOLVERHAMPTON
Martha Reeves & The Vandellas Robin 2 01902 497860
YORK
Cast/Little Triggers Fibbers 01904 651 250

MONDAY, DEC 24

BIRMINGHAM
Misty's Big Adventure Hare & Hounds 0870 264 3333
BRISTOL
Crazy Zoe/No Prima Donnas Mr Wolf's 0117 927 3221
GLASGOW
Sixth Avenue Traffic King Tut's Wah Wah Hut 0141 221 5279
LEICESTER
The Moonlights Donkey 0116 270 5042
LONDON
Serafina Steer St Leonard's Church 020 7739 2063
SOUTHSEA
The Racketeers Cellars 02392 826249

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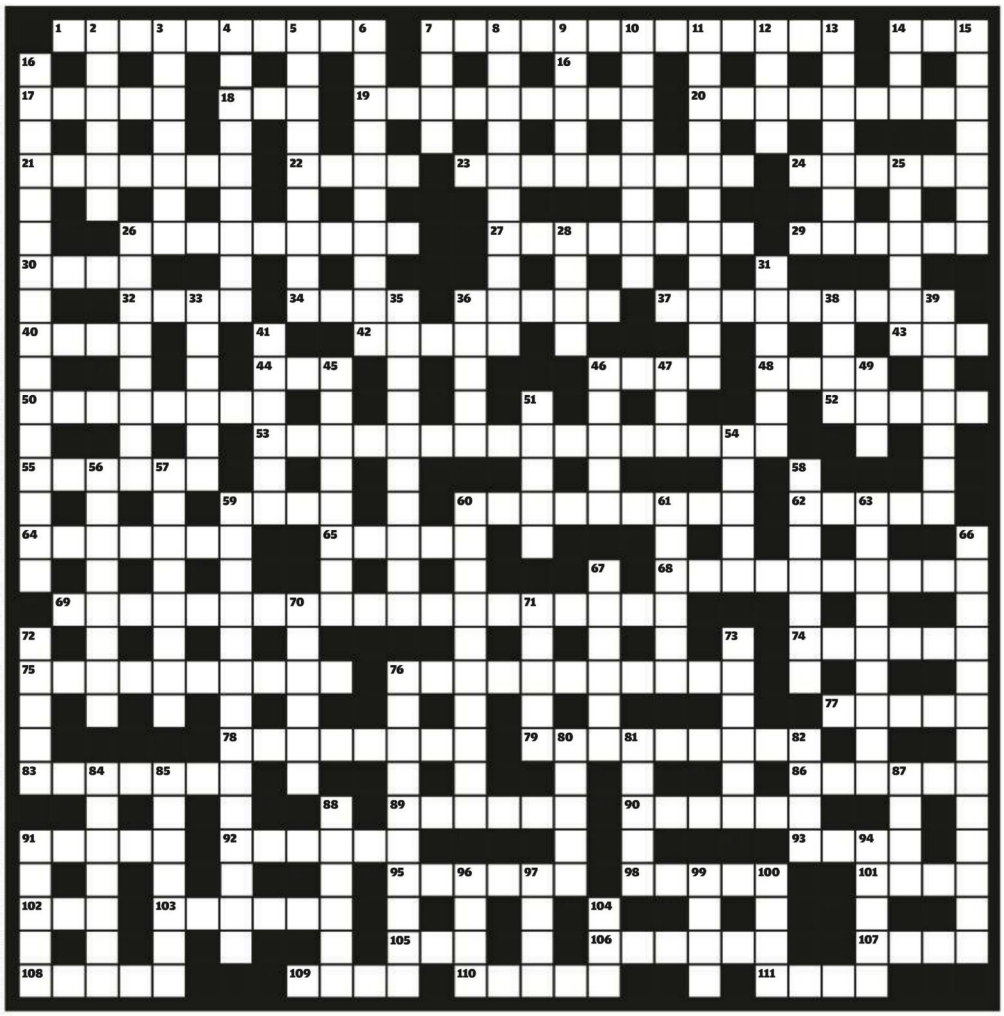
NME

BIG FAT XMAS XWORD

Digested all the turkey, Christmas pudding and Spector chat? Yes? Then relax with our biggest crossword of the year – if you can finish it, you could win a festive sack of NME goodies. **Compiled by Trevor Hunger-For-Mince-Pies**



CLUES ACROSS

1+7A Killers on horseback taking their partners for a glass of mulled wine (3-7-9-4)
14+3D A 'number one' for Biffy Clyro (3-7)
17 Trudge a long distance with bag-lady Sharon Van Etten (5)
18+19A Somehow Dan's only deal was for a Secret Machines number (3-3-6)
20 The Vaccines are not minor now (4-2-3)
21 (See 99 down)
22 At the very heart of things for The Stone Temple Pilots was their debut album (4)
23 For when things are not bad, it's music by Chic, Eric Burdon and The Hoodoo Gurus (4-5)
24 This album offer by Two Door Cinema Club could actually be a con (6)
26+36A I remarked on ban strangely given to a single by Python Lee Jackson/Rod Stewart (2-1-6-5)
27 The Bravery showed bravery in releasing this (8)
29+46D Talks as we're making arrangements for a Van Morrison album (6-5)
30 Liverpool band who sang 'Groovy Train' and 'All Together Now', The... (4)
32+45D Hold a steady firm view of a Hold Steady release (4-8)
34 *"All ___ in jest/Still a man hears what he wants to hear and disregards the rest"*, from Simon And Garfunkel's 'The Boxer' (4)
36 (See 26 across)
37 Third man I had upset by singing 'Don't Make Promises' (3-6)
40 Quiet please, Deep Purple are playing (4)
42 *"A band is blowing ____ double four time"*, from Dire Straits' 'Sultans Of Swing' (5)
43 The 1975 with a number that will be the finish of David Essex (3)
44 It's the music that we all like from a U2 album (3)
46 Old-fashioned message from the Manic Street Preachers (4)
48 *"1,000 ways to please your man, not even one requires a___"*, from The Strokes' 'You Only Live Once' (4)
50 Singer-songwriter who knows how to 'Murder Ballads' (4-4)
52+76D A sketch in remembrance of Embrace? (5-4-6)
53 *"You treat me like a dog, get me down on my knees/We call it _____ _____"*, Depeche Mode (6-3-7)
55 (See 109 across)
59+76A There's a cash point for this Supergrass album (2-2-3-3-5)
60 Have a drink with Kelis (9)
62+57D She first appeared from 'Under The Sheets' in 2009 (5-8)
64 (See 9 down)
65 *"Let's dance to Joy Division and celebrate the ____/Everything is going wrong"*, The Wombats (5)
68 Fronted by Billy Mackenzie, they had an '80s hit with 'Party Fears Two' (10)
69 *"Not to put too fine a point on it/Say I'm the only bee in your bonnet"*, 1999 (9-2-4-4)
74+81D *"Was that the wrong pill to take? Raise it up"*, 2009 (6-5)
75 They spoke well of Jack White (10)
76 (See 59 across)
77 Their singles include 'This Is Radio ___' and '____ City Rockers' (5)
78 Songstress who has appeared on Bombay Bicycle Club recordings (4-4)
79 Poor practices resulting in a General Fiasco of a performance (3-6)
83 *"_____ is where we start, a thousand poles apart"*, 2012 (7)
86 John ____, whose Bluesbreakers have included Eric Clapton and Peter Green (6)
89 Member of Neil Young's Crazy Horse gets stuck into a semolina pudding (6)
90 A bit of a strange look for Brotherhood Of Man hit (6)
91 (See 28 down)
92 A rather personal question from The Kooks (2-2-2)
93 *"Day after day, alone on a hill/The man with the foolish ___ is keeping perfectly still"*, from The Beatles' Fool On The Hill' (4)
95 (See 38 down)
98 (See 107 across)
101 *"I fear rivers overflowing/I hear the voice of___ and ruin"*, from Creedence Clearwater Revival's 'Bad Moon Rising' (4)
102 Yeasayer number taken from The Rolling Stones (1-1-1)
103 The atom he exploded with Crystal Fighters (2-4)
105 *"Will you tell me when the lights are fading, 'cos I can't see, I can't see no more"*, 2008 (3)
106 Musical with the two main characters Danny and Sandy (6)
107+98A Awful pithy muck from The White Stripes (4-5)
108 A bit of a shitty song for member of Cast (5)
109+55A A terrible nervy sight for Midlands band of the '80s (4-6)
110+70D Infatuated with the glamour of performing live for a Rory Gallagher album (5-6)
111 There's no fat on Joe, especially without his Jing Jang Jong (4)

CLUES DOWN

2 Wonderful place that has an Emeli Sandé single and a Walkmen album (6)
3 (See 14 across)
4 Frank Turner's early Anglo-Saxon roots (6-3)
5 The songs on this Nils Lofgren album won't be newly learnt (3-6)
6 Perhaps yesterday will be about right for follow-up single to 62 across (6-4)
7 A bit of disco dancing to Led Zeppelin album (4)
8 The Strokes somehow get one from Rio (4-2-4)
9+64A *"Birds come flying from the underground/If you could see it you'd understand"*, 2005 (5-2-5)
10 (See 25 down)
11 *"Nobody knows it but you've got a_____ _____, and you use it only for me"*, 1999 (6-5)
12+91D Put your hands right up in the air! It's Joe Strummer And The Mescaleros (4-5)
13 Left the strange noises to a posthumous Amy Winehouse album (7)
14 Cat Stevens' album '__ For The Tillerman' (3)
15 Unremitting sound of that immortal '90s R&B group (7)
16 *"Yes, it's the_____ _____ _____ that's holding our salvation"*, New Order (5-2-3-6)
25+10D Ray lifted music wrongfully from this American soul/R&B legend (6-8)
26 Miki Nash turns up with a Jack White single (2-6)
28+91A Regrettably she was named by Mystery Jets (4-5)
31 How to serve up the cream of Devo's recordings (4-2)
33 Repeatedly puts on a Blink-182 number (6)
35 Perhaps the TV's in lower place for The Men They Couldn't Hang (6-4)
36 *"Squeeze me baby with all your might/Oh, please stay with me, ____"*, Paul Anka (5)
38+95A *"On the corner of main street, just tryin' to keep it in line"*, 2007 (4-2-4)
39 Album from The Auteurs comes with a fresh outbreak (3-4)
41 *"I don't feel safe in this world no more, I don't want to die in a nuclear war"*, The Kinks (6)
45 (See 32 across)
46 (See 29 across)
47 (See 58 down)
49 I leave 93 across and make a comeback with Adamski (1-1-1)
51 She can be seen in homemade leggings (5)
54 (See 96 down)
56 Both Niki + The Dove and Iggy Pop had the knack for recording albums (8)
57 (See 62 across)
58+47D Their albums include 'Deserter's Songs' and 'Snowflake Midnight' (7-3)
59 That's me totally in the dark about being on the road for both Cyndi Lauper and Roy Orbison (1-5-3-5)
60 More boldly makes move for The White Stripes (2-8)
61 Both Professor Green and Roxy Music have a connection with the legend of King Arthur (6)
63 Legendary blues musician who might have been able to stomach heavy metal (4-5)
66 Only lets Hives do version of a Stevie Wonder classic (4-3-6)
67+80D How Art Brut got going in order to release their debut single (6-1-4)
70 (See 110 across)
71 Amy Winehouse got into some bizarre habits (5)
72 Put something on, like PJ Harvey's first single (5)
73 *"I don't need you to worry because I'm alright/I don't want you to tell me it's time to come home"*, Billy Joel (2-4)
76 (See 52 across)
80 (See 67 down)
81 (See 74 across)
82 This makes it difficult to see Bill Callahan's band (4)
84 Tyler, The Creator number from the state of New York (7)
85 It's a ban wrongly imposed on a single from Five Thirty (7)
87 An American naturally includes an early Beatles' number (4)
88 Tommy ____, British rock'n'roller who was 'Singing The Blues' in the '50s (6)
91 (See 12 down)
94 Big Dee ____ had '60s hit with 'Swinging On A Star' (5)
96+54D The blokes were satisfied by this Cribs number (4-5)
97 German singer who had UK number one in 1984 with '99 Red Balloons' (4)
99+21A The 'Luka' tape reworked by The Charlatans (2-2-3-4)
100 'The ___ Sessions' include a record number of 24 by The Fall (4)
104 *"The morning sun when it's in your face really shows your __"*, from Rod Stewart's 'Maggie May' (3)

NOVEMBER 10 ANSWERS
ACROSS 1 Miss Atomic Bomb, 10 The Bell, 11 Shields, 12+30A The Bitter End, 13+25A Samba Pa Ti, 14 Slip, 15+35A All Around The World, 19+26A+16D Up Town Top Ranking, 22 Nas, 24 Ask, 27+23D Days Of Speed, 29 Ben, 32 Ana, 33 God, 36+8D Happy Busman
DOWN 2 If Ever I Stray, 3 Seek It, 4 Talk Talk, 5 Mistrial, 6 Cribs, 7 Only Man, 9 Status Quo, 17 Dirt, 20 Not Fair, 21 Gap Band, 27 Dust, 28 Snow, 31 Doop, 34+18A Ooh La

Simply cut out the crossword and send it, along with your name, address and email, marking the envelope with the issue date, before Tuesday, December 28, 2011, to the following address: Crossword, *NME*, 9th Floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London, SE1 0SU. First correct one out of the hat wins!

SANTA'S BIG SACK

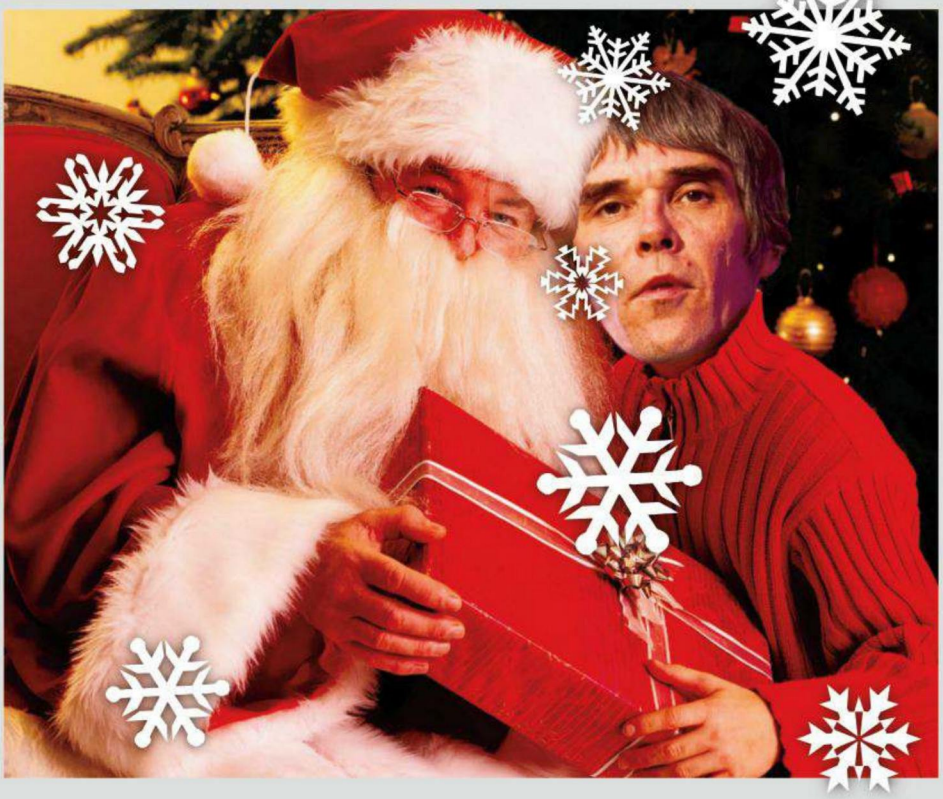
HAVE MUSIC'S GREAT AND GOOD BEEN NAUGHTY OR NICE?

Edited by Santa Claus

FACEBOOK.COM/NMEMAGAZINE | TWITTER.COM/NME | LETTERS@NME.COM

Letter of the week

The best of the NME mailbag



SHOOT YULE DOWN

To: Santa
From: Ian Brown

What you sayin', Santa, yeah? Stone Roses, up on a stage, all the rage, lookin' good for our age. Been a mega year in which me and the players have ruled the world again, just like we said we would. Got some more big gigs comin' up next year, gonna be Biblical. Glasgow Green, gonna be a scene, know what I mean? But the thing is: we've gotta do some new tunes as well now, innit? It's been massive playing all the old ones, and people have even been dead nice about me singing this time around, but this is the point at which our legacy is at stake. 2013 is gonna be the one you've waited for. We've been doing the usual hyping it up to the max thing, promising all the kids some proper classics, but I'm just gettin' a little bit nervous about it now. You couldn't lob us a Bible, could ya, to help out with me lyrics? Oh, and I know John's probably been on your case about getting a copy of that Led Zeppelin *Celebration Day* DVD, but do us a favour and swap it for a Byrds songbook or some hip-hop or summat, will ya? We all know what happened the last time he got in *that* zone.

Santa's response...

Ian, Ian, Ian. No-one is more excited than I am about your impending new songs. And listening to that ginormous solo box-set of yours that's just come out, I feel optimistic about your chances of adding to rather than subtracting from your legacy. Just learn some lessons from times past and you'll be fine. Get that Reni chappie of yours involved a bit more, and that lovely Mani guy, and you won't go too far wrong. Oh, and those lovely folk at *NME* have asked me for a full Stone Roses interview again. They were so disappointed last year, I could hardly stand to look at their little faces. How about Boxing Day?

CHRISTMAS VISIONS

From: Grimes
To: *Santa*

I'm gonna get straight to the point: I need to concoct some new mythology, and fast. My whole "staying up for nine days straight on speed making my record" shtick seemed to distract the hipster community from the fact that it basically sounded like really bad Enya, but I'm really not sure I can pull off the same trick twice and there are only so many colours you can dye your hair. Any ideas?

From: *Santa*
To: Grimes

Nonsense, my dear! There's nothing to worry about. I've been telling people to leave a glass of sherry out for me for years: as if I drink every single one of them! You're not alone in desperately trying to make yourself seem more interesting by lying about your drink/drug intake. And people are pretty fucking stupid.

KER-CHING DONG MERRILY

From: Mick Jagger
To: *Santa*

'Allo Santa, I've just got a little proposal I wanted to put to you regarding my band's inevitable stadium tour next year. The thing is, we've just done a couple of arena gigs, primarily to see how much all those CEOs who had long hair in the '60s would be willing to shell out for a ticket. And guess what? We dressed it up in all kinds of 'VIP enclosure' crap, and they went in seconds for £1,000 a pop! So now I'm thinking if we can get the 2013 dates announced sharpish – and of course if those cats at American Express are cool – we could work together on a Santa delivery package, where we charge them £3,000 each for you to personally deliver the tickets on Christmas Day. We could even embroider the ol' tongue logo on your coat for the occasion? I can offer you a 98-2 per cent split. What say ye?

From: *Santa*
To: Mick Jagger

I dunno, all these sleigh bells ain't cheap. And then I've got reindeer to keep happy. And elves. Shall we say £8,000, and then my cut can be bigger?

OH GOD, IT'S HIM AGAIN

From: Jack White
To: *Santa*

I'm still thinkin' 'bout my doorbell: when you gonna ring it, when you gonna ring it?

From: *Santa*
To: Jack White

I don't do doors. I do bells, but not bells on doors. That clear enough for you? Also, stop biting my colour scheme, you're confusing the brand message.

COME ALL YE WRATHFUL

From: Plan B
To: *Santa*

Yo Santa, you fucking muppet, fuck this Christmas shit, you get me? What's with this only coming down chimneys? Round here on the estates we ain't got no chimneys: the only thing that even vaguely looks like a fucking chimney round here is the Coalition's dick shafting us up the arse, every second of every day. Well, that and the fucking barrel of the Glock-9 you'd get in your eye if you DID ever come down my chimney without warning. We know you're serving us a con, mate, just like your Conservative mates: you come out once a fucking year, smiling down at us from your big golden sleigh, doling out stuff to the upper classes with a smile. How d'you think that makes us feel? Of COURSE we're gonna fucking riot, and yeah, everyone'll blame us, but it's the system that made us this way. It's YOU who made us this way, you red-faced fat cunt!

From: *Santa*
To: Plan B

Dearie me, my young friend, is this just because I don't need quite as many copies

REX, DAN DENNISON

of your latest album as I did the last one? Hardly my fault the housewives have gone off you, is it? Anyway, Santa forgives all, so I shall be sure to wrap you up another Oxbridge-educated journalist to incessantly declare you "the only artist speaking for kids from the council estates". It's not 2million-plus album sales, but it's the best I can do.
PS You were magnetic in *The Sweeney*.

OVERLY TALL ORDER

From: Alt-J
To: *Santa*
We'd like some charisma. Please.

From: *Santa*
To: Alt-J
How about a massive bag of drugs instead?

BLUE SCENES, QUITE HURT

From: Lana Del Rey
To: *Santa*
Santa baby, what a difference a year makes! This time last December I was writing to you about how I was drowning in an ocean of pseudo-intellectual online prevarications over whatever 'Video Games' was supposed to mean, but now? A year on I'm putting out songs about how my pussy tastes like Pepsi-Cola to not even a whimper from "the blogosphere". Oh sure, H&M, Jaguar, Mulberry and Findus Crispy Pancakes still can't get enough of me, but I just miss the feeling of being on the business end of some spotty Brooklynite twat's battered old iBook.

From: *Santa*
To: Lana Del Rey
I'm not sure there's a great deal I can do to help you, dearest Lizzie. But if you read on, maybe the chappie below can help you out.
PS You couldn't sling us one of them bags of yours, could you? The missus is desperate for one. Well, to be honest, she really wants one of that Alexa's ones, but yours'll do in these lean times.

TROUBLED TIMES

From: Matt Prime
To: *Santa*
You might not know me, because I've never had cause to write to you before. Up until this year, I was making a tidy living co-writing songs with *X Factor* types like Olly Murs and Will Young and him out of Blue. Then I get a call from this guy called Jake Bugg asking me to write a tune with him and before you know it he's on about killing off all "that X Factor shit". But if he succeeds in this mission, I'll soon have no work. I feel a bit embarrassed to even ask, but could you at least make sure there's a couple more of these 'real', 'authentic' artists who don't mind working with professional people like me on the sly? I won't tell if you won't.

To: Matt Prime
From: *Santa*
Weirdly, I was just chatting to a friend of mine who people used to say is really *in*authentic, so I reckon you two should get together! So how about you pour me a little sherry, and then get yourself over to: Lana Del Rey, 69 Mulholland Drive, Lynchtown, USA. Oh, and don't worry about all the eerie strings you hear round those parts, it's just what they do.

SILENT NIGHT, UNHOLY NIGHT

From: Hyde Park
To: *Santa*
"...s..."

"...s..."

"....d..."

"...PARKLIFE!..."

"...f..."

From: *Santa*
To: Hyde Park
I'm so sorry, I couldn't hear any of that. And I must be setting off now. Try to be a little bit louder next year.

ALL YOU NEED IS WUB

From: Skrillex
To: *Santa*
I don't know if you've heard, but I recently split up with a girl. She was quite lovely, but all she liked doing was jogging, talking about jogging and writing electro-tinged schmaltz. Plus, have you seen the Wiki page for her album? There were 67 people who worked on the bloody thing, including that Tinie Tempah guy! For a guy like me, who cuts generation-defining, face-melting tracks in the few moments of life when I'm not rocking the shit out of some American hellhole – usually on the crapper, to be honest – this just seems silly. So I need a new chick, man. And preferably one who's not gonna start copying my fucking haircut after two weeks.

From: *Santa*
To: Skrillex
I think the chances of you finding another person who isn't repulsed by your "look" – much less someone who is not-repulsed to the extent that they'll actually *copy* it – are slim. And to be honest, the utter rubbishness of these tunes you talk of is not exactly going to get the laydeez' pulses racing, either.

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STALKERS

From: Alex Turner
To: *Santa*
"I met *NME*'s Picture Queen Zoe when she was cycling round the Olympic opening ceremony. It's people like her who make this country great."

From: Sir Paul
To: *Santa*
"Here's me and *NME*'s Hamish MacBain having a quick groove together. He put £4 change in that jukebox to play 'Be Here Now' in full!"

From: The Weeknd
To: *Santa*
"I met *NME*'s Eve Barlow recently. I talked for hours and hours and hours. It was fun. I wish my record label would let me do more interviews."

From: Slash
To: *Santa*
"*NME*'s Deputy News Editor Jenny Stevens kindly agreed to pose for this photo earlier this year. I talked to her about snakes and drugs!"

NME

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DOES CHRISTMAS KILL BRAINCELLS?

TESTING MUSICIANS' MEMORIES AFTER A FESTIVE SEASON OF ABUSE

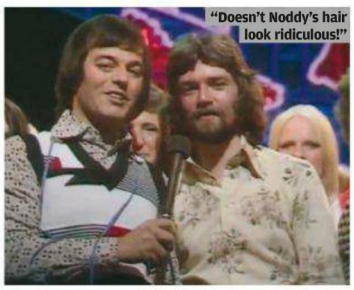
NODDY HOLDER
SLADE

QUESTION 1

Who introduced you when you performed 'Merry Xmas Everybody' on the Christmas Top Of The Pops in 1973?

"Noel Edmonds and Tony Blackburn."

Correct



"Doesn't Noddy's hair look ridiculous!"

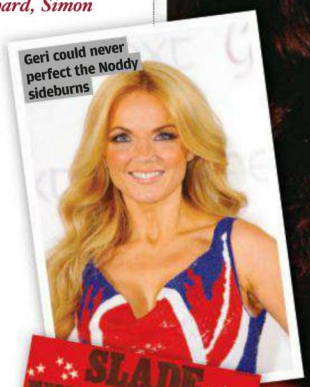
QUESTION 2

Name five guests on Ant & Dec's Christmas Show in 2009, where you were the announcer.

"Wouldn't have a clue. I was in a booth hidden away."

Wrong. Geri Halliwell, Richard Madeley, Piers Morgan, Cliff Richard, Simon Cowell... ring any bells?

"No."



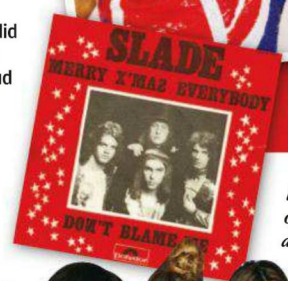
Geri could never perfect the Noddy sideburns

QUESTION 3

Which of the following have not performed a version of 'Merry Xmas Everybody': The Mission, Spice Girls, Noel Gallagher, Westlife, Megadeth, Girls Aloud, Steps, Tony Christie, REM?

"The Mission have. Spice Girls have. Noel did a great version for *The Royle Family*. Girls Aloud have. Steps have. Tony has. REM have. It's between Westlife and Megadeth. I'm going for Westlife."

Wrong. Megadeth



QUESTION 4

How much did The Sun report Slade were paid by Jive Bunny & The Mastermixers for sampling 'Merry Xmas Everybody' on their 1989 track 'Let's Party'?

"£50,000?"

Wrong. £20,000

QUESTION 5

What do your record label Polydor send you crates of every year to thank you for all the money 'Merry Xmas Everybody' makes for them?

"They used to buy us champagne every Christmas and we used to say, 'We don't really drink champagne. We'd rather have crates of beer'. They don't any more."

Correct

Girls: allowed to cover Slade

QUESTION 6

Who did a dance remix of 'Merry Xmas Everybody' in 1998?

"That Swedish dance duo. Sounds like a toilet cleaner. Was it Flush?"

Correct

QUESTION 7

When were your sideburns larger: when you performed 'Merry Xmas Everybody' on Christmas Day Top Of The Pops in 1973, or 10 years later in 1983?

"1973."

Correct. Do your chops take much work to maintain?

"They've always been a lot of work to maintain. I used to let them run wild in the early days. There are less sideburns now than there used to be."

QUESTION 8

What did you tell the Daily Mail in 2011 is the biggest common misconception about you?

"That people think I walk around in platform shoes with a top hat with mirrors on shouting 'Merry Christmas!' to all and sundry. Having said that, I don't think a day goes past when someone doesn't shout 'It's Christmaaaaaaas!' at me."

QUESTION 9

What did Slade have for Christmas dinner when you were spoofed by Reeves and Mortimer in the Slade In Residence Christmas special?

"Turkey flavoured Cup-A-Soup."

Correct

Vic and Nod's Big Night Out

QUESTION 10

While analysing the lyrics to 'Merry Xmas Everybody' in Melody Maker in 2000 – specifically the line "Do the fairies keep him sober for a day?" – how many different drinks did you reveal you like to have on Christmas Day?

"I have a glass of sherry, and a snowball because it takes me back. I have a whiskey, some red wine and a brandy somewhere. And my nightcap would be a hot toddy."

Correct

Total Score 7/10

"That's not bad! My braincells are not totally shattered. I was expecting them to be!"

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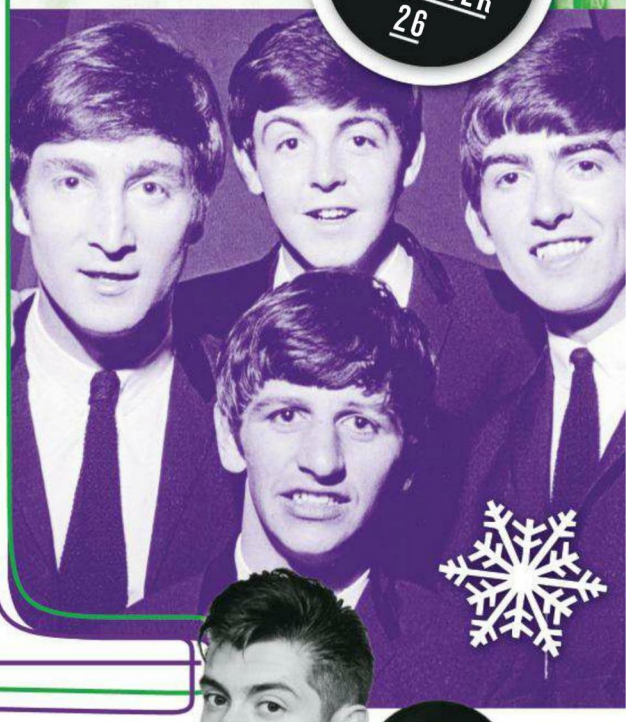
OUT WEDNESDAY DECEMBER 26



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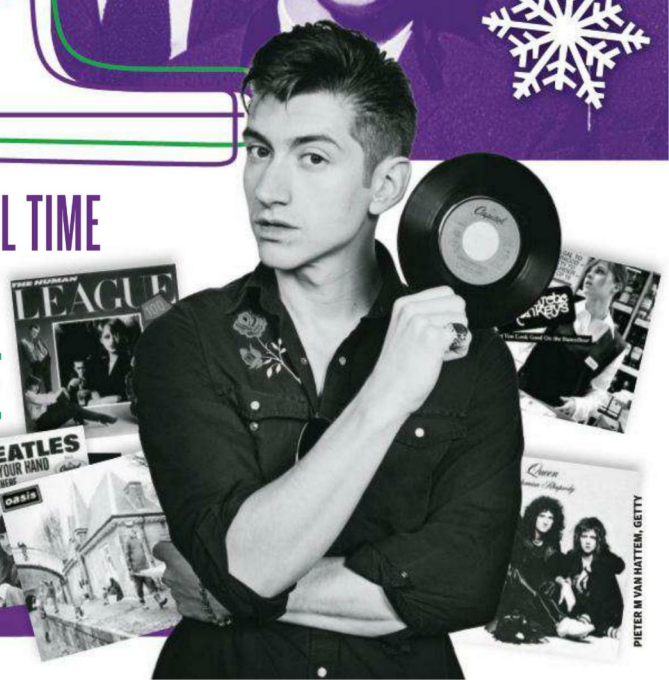
AS CHOSEN BY VAMPIRE WEEKEND, BIFFY CLYRO, BOMBAY BICYCLE CLUB, JOHNNY MARR AND NME



THE STORIES BEHIND SONGS BY

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NME

LIAM GALLAGHER

By Dean Chalkley

NME 2013

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ARCTIC MONKEYS

By Pamela Littky

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